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THE MISCELLANEOUS WORKS OF *JOHN HILDROP*, D.D.

Rector of WATH, in YORKSHIRE.

In TWO VOLUMES.

CONTAINING,

VOL. I.

An ESSAY for the better Regulation and Improvement of FREE-THINKING.

An ESSAY on HONOUR.

FREE THOUGHTS upon the BRUTE-CREATION: In two Letters to a LADY.

VOL. II.

A Modest Apology for the Antient and Honourable Family of the WRONGHEADS.

A Proposal for Reviſing, &c. the Ten Commandments.

Contempt of the CLERGY.

Life of *Simon Shallow*, Eſq;

VOL. II.

LONDON:

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MDCCLIV.

A

MODEST APOLOGY

FOR THE

Antient and Honourable FAMILY

OF THE

WRONGHEADS.

IN A

LETTER

TO THE

Right Honourable the E. of *C*——.

A MODEST APOLOGY FOR THE Antient and Honourable FAMILY OF THE *WRONGHEADS.*

My Lord,

THOUGH I have not the Honour to be perſonally known to your Lordſhip, yet your univerſal Character, diſtinguiſhed as much by your Affability and Politeneſs, as by your Wit and Quality, has encouraged me to apply myſelf to you, upon an Affair, in which my Honour and Intereſt, as well as that of my Family, are too nearly concerned to be ſilent.— I have the Honour, my Lord, to be very nearly related to the Honourable Family, whoſe Apology I am writing; my Mother being Siſter to the celebrated Sir *Francis*, of immortal Memory.

As we are a very numerous Family, and well allied, no Wonder that many of us are employed in eminent Poſts of Honour and Profit; and ſometimes, perhaps, in the Management and Direction of Affairs of the greateſt Conſequence, both in Church and State. Now, as all of us happen to be in a different Way of Thinking from your Lordſhip, all the World ſees you have contracted an incurable Averſion to the whole Family. Whenever you take it in your Head to be diſpleaſed with the Management of public Affairs, upon every Suſpicion of political Miſconduct, the Cry is immediately raiſed upon us all; the Guilt of every miniſterial Blunder is charged upon ſome or other of our Kindred; though I will take upon me, to anſwer for every individual Perſon concerned in ſuch Counſels or Tranſactions, that they ſhall ſeparately and jointly depoſe, upon their corporal Oath, that they have no more Relation to the Family than your Lordſhip. This is very hard! but what is ſtill harder, your Lordſhip is ſaid to take this Liberty in the moſt auguſt Aſſembly in the World; where, it is well known, we have not, at preſent, ſo much as one Friend or Relation to undertake our Cauſe, or ſpeak one Word in our Juſtification.

As this muſt be thought a great Hardſhip upon ſo many innocent Sufferers, I humbly intreat your Lordſhip's Indulgence, whilſt I am endeavouring to do Juſtice to the moſt numerous Family in the Univerſe; and which is, by Blood or Marriage, related to the moſt illuſtrious Houſes in *Europe*.

The Antiquity of our Family (an Article that has given Diſtinction and Precedency to many a worthleſs Litter, who had no other ſingle good Quality to

recommend them) may, I humbly presume, with more than equal Justice, be pleaded by us, who have been, in all Ages, distinguished by the most eminent and meritorious Services, and been rewarded accordingly. I know it has been suggested by our Enemies, that we are but of Yesterday; that we were the *Aborigines* of a certain neighbouring Kingdom, transplanted into this and other Countries, all over the Globe, by mere Necessity, to pick up a comfortable Subsistence abroad, which we could not find at home. This is so gross a Calumny as could only proceed from downright Ignorance, or Malice, or both; since every one that has the least Acquaintance with History, must know the contrary. It appears, by the concurrent Testimonies of the most antient and faithful Historians, that we have made shining and illustrious Figures in every Age and Nation under Heaven; and even in our own, in which we are more immediately concerned, we have had Princes, Peers, Prelates, and Privy-Counsellors; not to mention Baronets, Simple Knights, 'Squires, and Justices of the Peace, innumerable.

We are informed by History, that one of our Family was a *Conjurer*, (an Honour that many an illustrious House cannot boast of) with this particular Circumstance, that his Name was *Simon*, and he always went by the Name of *Simon the Conjurer*. But as he seems to have been but a poor Performer, and came to an untimely End, by an unsuccessful Experiment, even in his own Profession, we are not very vain of our Relation; and as he is said to have lived a great while ago, and there has not been one in the Family ever since, we have taken a great deal of

Pains, both in Private and Public, to perſuade the World, that there never was any *ſuch Perſon.* I mean any *ſuch Character*; and that all the Pretenders to that Sort of Knowledge are *Quacks* and *Impoſtors*, and ought rather to be puniſhed for Cheats, than Aſſociates with evil Spirits, who have ſomething elſe to do, than to be at the Call of every beggarly Raſcal, or doating old Woman, that pleaſes to employ them: Whereas, if they had Leiſure or Inclination to trouble themſelves with our dirty Affairs, they might be admitted into Cabinets and Drawing-rooms, might have a Seat in ******, or the Direction of ******, upon giving proper Security for their true and faithful Attachment, and due Attention to the Intereſts of their Patrons. But to return.

Though at preſent we lie under great and popular Diſcouragements, by the unreaſonable and ungrateful Oppoſition of ſome that ſhall be nameleſs, who affect to forget that they owe their preſent Portion of Wealth and Power to the ſuperfine Policy of the *Wrongheads*, their Predeceſſors; yet we are not without reaſonable Hopes of retrieving, one Day, the Honour and Figure of the Family, and contributing as much to the Glory and Proſperity of the preſent or riſing Generation, as our Predeceſſors have done to the paſt. To enter into a Detail of the many Services we have been doing to the Public, would be an endleſs and needleſs Taſk: I ſhall rather chooſe to lay before your Lordſhip, a ſhort View of ſeveral wonderful Improvements and Refinements we have made, in the three great Articles of *Learning*, *Religion*, and *Politics*, by which we ſtand eminently diſ-

tinguiſhed from the reſt of Mankind; and from which we may one Day promiſe ourſelves ſuch a Superiority of Rank and Character, as is due to ſuch ſuperior Merit, and the Services, we are every Day doing to our native Country.

The Figure we made, and the Rank we ſuſtained, in the *learned* World, for above a thouſand Years, is too well known to admit of a Diſpute; our Enemies themſelves confeſs it, and, by a prepoſterous Kind of Vanity, upbraid us with it. It is well known, that during that long Space of Time, we had the intire Government and Direction of much the greater Part of the *Univerſities*, *Churches*, *Schools*, and *learned* Societies in *Europe*; and filled moſt of the Profeſſors Chairs in every Faculty. This is ſo notorious, that we have ever ſince, by univerſal Conſent, obtained the diſtinguiſhing Title of *the Schoolmen*. And the *Divinity* and *Philoſophy* of thoſe Schools of ours, were the Light and Glory of thoſe happy Ages. We were the ſole Authors of thoſe immenſe Treaſures of Learning, which, ſince the Invention of *Printing*, have made ſuch a pompous and voluminous Appearance in the Libraries of the Learned, under the illuſtrious Titles of *Summæ*, *Sententiæ*, *Loci Communes*, *Diatribæ*, *Commentaria*, *Theſauri*, *Collectanea*, *Queſtiones*, &c. which, by the barbarous Pride and Ignorance of the *Moderns*, are brought into ſo great Contempt, that nothing but public Libraries, ſecured by Locks, and Bolts, and Chains, can preſerve them from the worſe than *Gothic* Fury of Paſtry-cooks, Bandbox-makers, Grocers, and Chandlers. This was in a great meaſure owing to the malicious Oppoſition we met with, about two Centu-

ries ago, from that bitter Enemy to all profound Erudition, *Eraſmus*; who, with ſome other evil-minded Perſons in that and our own Country, raiſed ſuch a Cry and Perſecution againſt us, as had well nigh ended in the Deſtruction of our whole Family; notwithſtanding all which, though we were often obliged to ſhift our Quarters, in order to eſcape the Fury of our Perſecutors, we ſtill continued to hold up our Heads, and make a tolerable Figure in ſome Parts of the World or other; from whence we have been able, from time to time, to ſend Authors and Profeſſors to ſome of the moſt eminent Societies in *Europe*. And theſe are they that have enriched the learned World with many voluminous Inquiries, acute Conjectures, and profound Diſcoveries, in every Branch of Science, and Article of Learning.

Very few of us indeed have pretended to be Authors of particular Syſtems, founded upon Principles, and regularly digeſted into Concluſions; yet have we not been wanting in our beſt Endeavours, to improve and illuſtrate ſeveral Articles of Knowledge, which others have, through Pride or Ignorance, overlooked or deſpiſed. How many curious and learned Diſſertations, for inſtance, have we publiſhed, *De Nummulis*, *Veſtibus*, *Vaſibus*, *Fibulis*, *Cochlearibus*, *Salinis*, *Urnis*, *Balneis*, *Sepulchris*, &c. *Romanis*, to the great Comfort and Edification of all true Lovers of Antiquity, and the clearer Elucidation of the moſt valuable Writers of that Age and Nation? and convinced the learned World, that the venerable Ruſt of one of thoſe precious Relics was of more Value to a true Virtuoſo, than the moſt exact Knowledge of the

the Genius, Policy, and Actions of that mighty Nation. For how could we possibly form an exact Notion (for instance) of a *Roman* Feast, and the luxurious Entertainments, so frequently described by the Satirists and Historians of those Times, without knowing the exact Form of the Tables, Dishes, Spoons, Salts, Cookery, and Sauces, that were used on those Occasions? What Idea could we have of the *Beaux* and *Belles* of antient *Rome*, when they made their grand Appearance at a Ball, in the Theatre, or at Court, unless we know exactly the Name, Shape, and Matter of every Piece and Article of their Dress, without which, many a fine Passage in *Petronius*, *Persius*, *Juvenal*, and *Horace*, would be perfectly unintelligible? It was this Sort of Knowledge, that enabled a certain great Genius of our own to write such excellent Notes upon *Athenæus*; in order to which, he spared no Cost nor Pains to procure the best Light he could from the Writings of the Antients. In the Course of his Inquiries, he had the good Fortune to find an excellent Receipt for a Pudding, in one of *Aristophanes*'s Plays. He also discovered the true Way of making and frying the celebrated *Alphiton*, or Barley-meal Pancake, of the *Spartans*, and the *black Broth* of the *Lacedæmonians*; as also the Matter and Form of the famous *Thericlean Cups*, which were used in their most magnificent Entertainments; with many other important Discoveries in the *Greek* and *Roman* Cookery. By his profound and exact Knowledge of the *Roman Coiffure*, he has given abundant Lights to many obscure Passages in the *Roman* Satirists; particularly that in *Juvenal*, which has so much puzzled the antient Scholiasts *Compagibus altis*

ædificare caput, which in ſhort was neither more nor leſs than dreſſing a Commode. By theſe and other uſeful Labours of this Sort, we have contributed not a little to the Improvement of the *Belles Lettres* in all Parts of *Europe*, eſpecially in *Germany* and *Italy*, as well as in our own Country. How many learned Editors, Tranſlators, Commentators, Critics, and Grammarians have we produced? How many various Readings even of various Readings, how many Notes upon Annotations, Criticiſms upon Critics, and Commentaries upon Commentators, have we publiſhed? How many elaborate Treatiſes have we compoſed upon ſuch Subjects as never entered into any Heads, or employed any Pens but our own? How many uſeful and valuable *Words*, *Letters*, *Commas*, *Colons*, and *Semicolons*, and other Cements and Ornaments of good Writing, which, by the barbarous Ignorance, or unpardonable Negligence of Tranſcribers and Printers, have been mutilated, defaced, miſplaced, or loſt, have we recovered and reſtored to their proper Rank and Dignity in the Republic of Learning?

The Preference that has been given by a * Learned Writer to the *Germans* and *Italians*, in theſe Improvements and Refinements of Learning, is, in my Opinion, little leſs than a national Reflection upon our own Countrymen; and I verily believe was ſo intended.

The Germans (ſays he, *p.* 199.) *have wrote Genealogies innumerable, and publiſhed ſo many Diplomata, Acts, Rules, and Uſages, not only of every State and Province, but of every petty Seigniory, Diſtrict, Village, School,*

* *A Deſcription of* Holland. London 1743.

Convent,

Convent, Univerſity, &c. *enough, collected together, to compoſe a Body of* 5 *or* 600 *Folio's, have, with infinite Pains, Paſſion, and Prolixity, cleared up a remote Hint of an antient Poet, about an old Medal, or the Situation of a Lake, as Matters of infinitely more Importance than to know the Hiſtory of their Forefathers, and the Virtues of thoſe Waters, Plants, Food, Fruit, and Air, ſo neceſſary to their Country and themſelves.* Which to be ſure was quite right. For, as for the Virtues of their Soil, Waters, Plants, Food, Fruit, and Air, in which the moſt illiterate Blockheads in the Country, and the Beaſts themſelves, had as great an Intereſt as the moſt learned Philoſopher, they were proper Subjects of Inquiry for Phyſicians, Gardeners, Dairy-men, and Graziers; but were unworthy the particular Attention of Men of Science and profound Erudition: Whereas to a true Virtuoſo, one Purſe of Braſs or Silver Medals would be of more Value than 100 of *Portugueſe* Gold; and the recovering the Situation of an old Lake, would be of more Conſequence than recovering a good old Manſion-Houſe and 5000 Acres of dry Land to the Family.

He proceeds (*p.* 200.) *The Learning and Inquiries of* Italy *have been very well employed during the three laſt Centuries. It is now found out, and demonſtrated beyond the Poſſibility of Contradiction, that the* Corona radialis *had twelve Rays in it, and not ſix or eight, as was fondly believed before: That* Juno Soſpita's *Feet were always bare, though the Generality of Antiquaries and Sculptors have been ſo ignorant as to wrap them up in Buſkins or Stockings. It is alſo fully made out, that the Tibia or Flagelet had more Stops than it has hitherto been deſcribed to have; and this, the laſt Pope but one, who*

who was a very profound Scholar, declared to be his Opinion, though he would not take upon him to aſcertain their Number. Several other Virtuoſi, of more Preſumption, though perhaps not more Learning, have ventured to give their Conjectures upon this nice Point, in very curious and elaborate Diſſertations. And for two hundred and fifty Years paſt, not only Italy, *but the greateſt Part of* Europe, *have been in a very groſs Error, concerning the particular Dreſs of* Priapus; *whereas now there is nothing clearer, than that the aforeſaid God had ſeveral Dreſſes, which ſeveral eminent Men are now employed in making out.* Pliny's *two floating Iſlands are not yet found out; but what has not been, may in Time be effected. The learned Perſons who are at preſent in Purſuit of them, conceive they have made a greater Progreſs towards that Diſcovery, than the moſt diligent of their Predeceſſors.*

Whilſt this ingenious Writer is doing Juſtice to theſe learned Foreigners, he cannot help diſcovering a manifeſt Partiality and Prejudice to our own Countrymen, and often inſinuates, with a malicious Sneer, their Ignorance or Neglect of theſe valuable Branches of Learning. He profeſſes himſelf to be an *Engliſhman*, that has lived moſt of his Time abroad, which muſt be allowed to be the beſt Apology for his Ignorance of the State of Learning among us. I myſelf am able to furniſh out a goodly Catalogue of very learned and profound Inquiries, intirely of *Britiſh* Growth, no whit inferior either in Bulk or Utility to the moſt elaborate Performances of other Nations. Has he never read or heard of the many uſeful Diſcoveries we have made in the ſeveral Branches of Learning? Has he never ſeen a learned Diſſertation

upon

upon the Antiquity and Uſes of *Weather-cocks?* Where we have proved to a Demonſtration, that though they are much in modern Uſe, they are by no means a modern Invention, but were as antient as the *Argonautic* Expedition, being invented by *Zethys* and *Calais*, the Sons of *Boreas*, though greatly improved ſince their Time; we have found out, and proved beyond Contradiction, that the *Sybarites* were the firſt that laid Roſe-cakes and Lavender among their Linen; and that no leſs a Perſon than *Sardanapalus* was the firſt Inventor of Cuſhions, and, by conſequence, of Squabs and Eaſy-Chairs, to the great Eaſe and Refreſhment of the Learned and the Lazy, to all ſucceeding Generations; but our moſt valuable Work is a MS. Treatiſe *de Umbraculis*, of the Nature and Uſe of Screens, which, though a very antient and uſeful Invention, and of a very ſimple Nature, has received ſuch Improvements from the united Studies and Encouragements of the greateſt Men among us, that it may juſtly be eſteemed one of the moſt valuable Utenſils, even in the greateſt Families. This uſeful Machine was not unknown to the *Greeks*, who called it Ἐπικάλυμμα; and by an Expreſſion common among them Κακῶν ἐπικάλυμμα ἐστιν ὁ πλέτων, one would be apt to conclude it was always made of Gold or Silver. But the learned *Scriblerus* has found out, from comparing antient Authorities, that the true Reading is not πλέτων, but πλάτων; which, as it cannot well be rendered into *Engliſh*, I ſhall leave to the Conſideration of the Learned, though it ſeems rather to expreſs the Name of the Inventor, than the Materials of which it is made. Of theſe the Public may ſoon expect to ſee a very ample and curious

rious Specimen, being the Collection of my much honoured Friend and Kinſman, *Jeffery Piddle*, Eſq; who has been many Years employed in picking up whatever was curious and valuable in every Branch of Literature. I ſpeak with the more Confidence of this ineſtimable Work, becauſe one of the moſt extraordinary Pieces was communicated to him through my Hands; of which I beg Leave to give your Lordſhip a ſhort Hiſtory.

The learned and worthy Dr. *Trimeter* was a Profeſſor, and Head of a learned Society; from whom, as a Friend and Relation, I had often received diſtinguiſhing Marks of Affection and Eſteem. In a dangerous Illneſs, that he ſent for me, and told me, he had a Secret of great Importance to communicate to me; that he was in Poſſeſſion of a Piece of Learning, the Labour of fourteen Years, which, he modeſtly believed, no Man in *Europe* was Maſter of but himſelf; and that he had long determined to put it into my Hands, that it might not die with him, and be irrecoverably loſt to Poſterity. The Knowledge I had of his great Abilities and ſerious Turn of Mind, and the great Gravity with which he expreſſed himſelf, made me conceive, it was ſome *Roſicrucian Myſtery*, in which Society he had been initiated many Years ago. Sometimes I fancied, he had diſcovered the *Grand Elixir*, or ſome other Chymical Secret— But he delivered me a little Roll of Paper, with this remarkable Speech. *Couſin*, (ſaid he) *you are now in Poſſeſſion of a great Secret, which, when I am dead, you will poſſeſs without a Rival.* It is not eaſy to conceive the Gratitude and Tranſport with

with which I received this *ineſtimable Depoſitum.* I made all the Haſte I decently could, to my Study, in order to examine the Contents. I double-locked my Door, ſhut up my Windows, lighted up two large Candles, waſhed my Hands, and compoſed myſelf with all the Gravity required of a Philoſopher, and a Student in the Occult Sciences, and then opened my Packet; and, to my unſpeakable Surprize, found it to be nothing leſs than a Critic upon *Waſes Senarius*, ſhewing, to a Demonſtration, that that Great Man, who was in the higheſt Reputation for his critical Knowledge in the Metre of *Plautus* and *Terence*, had fallen into the common Miſtakes of vulgar Critics and Grammarians; that he had frequently confounded the *Anapæſtus* with the *Tribrachus*, and in no leſs than five ſeveral Places, had miſtaken the *Bacchius* for the *Antibacchius*, with ſeveral other unpardonable Miſtakes in the Rules of *Scanſion*: Shewing alſo, at the ſame time, that the *true Scanſion* is the only infallible Way of aſcertaining the true Reading.—A noble Diſcovery! But as my Head was not violently turned to this Sort of Erudition, and I was unwilling that the Labour of ſo many Years ſhould be loſt to the learned World, by falling into vulgar Hands, I made a Preſent of it to my learned Kinſman, who will ſoon make a Preſent of it, and ſome other Rarities, to the Public, with the ſame Generoſity, that I did to him.

The ſame great Genius has compoſed ſeveral other Pieces of equal Uſe and Value, which I hope to recover, and convey to the Public by the ſame Canal. The firſt was a little Treatiſe *De Tripode*, or, *The Uſes and Antiquity of three-legged Stools*; ſhewing them

to be much more uſeful and antient than the four-legged or Joint-ſtool, in which many curious Points both in Hiſtory and Philoſophy are occaſionally diſcuſſed. Another, *De Muſcipulis*; or, *A Diſſertation upon Mouſe-Traps*; intended as a Kind of Critic upon Mr. *Holdſworth*'s celebrated Poem, ſhewing the antient Uſe of them among the *Greeks* and *Romans*; and that he was intirely miſtaken as to the Occaſion and Manner of their Invention.—I have alſo ſeen two *Theological Diſſertations* (as he calls them): 1. Upon *Gehazi*'s *Leproſy*. 2. Upon *Judas*'s *Thirty Pieces of Silver*. In order to make the firſt quite a complete Work, he wrote to a Friend of his, who was travelling in the *Levant*, to make all the Inquiry he could, whether any Branch of *Gehazi*'s leprous Family were living; and, if poſſible, to procure a Twig or two to be ſent over at his Expence, which he intended to make a Preſent of to the College of Phyſicians, to be ſhewn among their exotic Curioſities whilſt living, and afterwards to be preſerved in Spirits of Wine, as a perpetual Argument againſt Infidelity; and a Standing Admonition to Miniſters of all Sorts, how they foul their Fingers with Gratuities, Jobbs, and Perquiſites, for doing nothing more than the common Offices of Juſtice and Humanity. As he was one Day gravely reading his MS. to me, all of a ſudden he ſtopped ſhort, and threw himſelf back in his Chair; and, after a long Pauſe, he began as follows: *Couſin*, (ſays he) *I have been conſidering the Character of this ſame* Gehazi, *and the Office he ſuſtained under his Maſter. He ſeems to have been his* prime, *if not his* ſole, Miniſter; *for it does not appear, that he ſuffered any body to ſhare with him in that pretty*

Per-

Perquiſite he received from the generous Syrian. *Why then, may not this whole Story be an Allegory, after the Eaſtern Way of Writing? Why may we not underſtand by his Seed or Poſterity, his Succeſſors, in that or any other Family. For, from his conſtant Attendance on his Maſter, he muſt needs have been a ſingle Man, and therefore could have no Seed or natural Poſterity, to inherit either his Curſe or his Fortune; and then by the* Leproſy, *we may underſtand an hereditary Itch in the Fingers, or ſome ſcrophulous Diſorder* (only to be cured by Touching). *The Thought is pretty.— What think you of it?* As I was ſtudying for an Anſwer, after another long Pauſe, he recollected himſelf in this Manner: *But upon ſecond Thoughts, this will not do, the Parallel will not hold; the Text tells us, that this* Gehazi *went out of his Office* as white as Snow; *whereas moſt of thoſe that went out ſince, are ſaid to have been of a quite different Complexion.*——The other was an occaſional Meditation upon *Good-Friday.* Being hindered by a Cold from going to Church, I went to viſit him after the Service was over. I found him very buſy in Calculation; he told me he had been employing his Thoughts upon the Subject of the Day, that he had computed the Sterling Value of the Thirty Pieces, and what it would have amounted to by this Time, Intereſt upon Intereſt, at 5 *per Cent.* Upon my Word, ſays he, it would have been a noble Sum; a fine Thing for his Family, believe me, Couſin; many a Great Man, whom I could name, would have done the ſame Thing for half the Money.— I hope theſe invaluable Pieces may be recovered for the Good of the Public.

There

There will be alſo in the ſame Collection ſome choice Anecdotes of a reverend Member of our Family. As he is ſtill living in a good Degree of Splendor and Reputation, I ſhall conceal his Name, and ſave his Bluſhes for the Honour I am doing him. He was early diſtinguiſhed in the Univerſity for his ſingular Modeſty, and invincible Affection for Solitude and Cuſtard; he walked much, ſaid little, and read leſs; but, doubtleſs, paid it off with Thinking. His Tutor, a Stranger to the Genius of our Family, imputed this Behaviour to Stupidity and Idleneſs; and therefore, meeting him one Day in his Walks, accoſted him as follows: T. *Sir, I am ſorry to meet you ſo often walking abroad, I wiſh you would keep at home, and ſtudy.* P. *Study, Sir, why ſo I do; I read the Claſſics.* T. *Pray, which of them?* P. *I read* Terence. T. *How much have you read?* P. *I have read fourteen Plays.* The good Man lifted up his Hands and Eyes with Admiration, and ſaid, *Sir, I would have you read* Virgil. *Aye, indeed,* Virgil (ſaid he) *I know him too well. Too well!* (ſaid the Tutor) *Sir, what do you mean? Why, Sir,* (ſaid he) *I know that he ſtole the very firſt Verſe of his Book out of the Grammar.* This ſurprizing Diſcovery threw the poor Gentleman into ſuch immoderate Convulſions, as had like to have deſtroyed all his retentive Faculties at once; but when he had a little recovered himſelf, he conſidered, that, as my good Couſin certainly was an Original—an exalted Genius far above Ordinances, and the vulgar Methods of Education, he determined to leave him to his own Inventions, in which he profited beyond meaſure. In ſhort, he took his Degrees, entered into Orders,

and

and is now a great *Pluraliſt* and a *Dignitary*. The firſt Account I had of this laſt Promotion was at a Coffee-houſe, where it was the Subject of much Converſation and Merriment among a Set of Gentlemen, who ſeemed to have no great Eſteem or Affection for our Family. Upon which one of them ſaid, *For my part, I am not at all ſurpriſed that a Man who has been for ſo many Years a moſt remarkable Blunderbuſs, ſhould at laſt become a Canon.* At which they all burſt into a moſt incomprehenſible Laughter. This provoked me not a little; I looked ſternly upon them, and, with a grave Tone, replied, *Gentlemen, you may be as merry as you pleaſe, but remember, there is a good old Proverb, which ſays, Let him laugh that wins.* I then looked at my Watch, paid down my Penny, and left them to finiſh their Laugh by themſelves. How great ſoever my Couſin's Preferment may be, I think he has reaſonable Expectations of greater, having been more than once employed by his Patrons to compoſe ſome ſhining Pieces for the *Gazetteer*, in which he *out-did his uſual Out-doings*; and for which, in my poor Judgment, he can never be ſufficiently rewarded.—As he ſometimes does me the Honour to converſe with me upon Subjects of Learning, I have made ample Diſcoveries of the Strength of his Genius, and the Profundity of his Underſtanding, and may venture to promiſe the Public ſomething very curious and entertaining, worthy ſuch a Genius and ſuch a Pen. I happened one Day to mention my great Eſteem for the late *Biſhop* Hooper's *Treatiſe of Weights and Meaſures*, he turned ſhort upon me, and, with a contemptuous Smile, told me, *That* Thorndyke's *juſt Weights and Meaſures were worth a thouſand of them.* As I make it a Point of Duty, as

well as good Manners, not to contradict a *Dignitary*, I took care to be exceedingly aſtoniſhed at his judicious Remark, and excuſed myſelf, by confeſſing my Want of Capacity to make the Compariſon.

Another Time we were talking of the *Reformation*; and as I could not help mentioning the Part that *Cromwell* bore in that Tranſaction, he began to upbraid me with my Ignorance in Hiſtory and Chronology, and undertook to demonſtrate, that *that Uſurper* could not poſſibly have any Hand in that Affair, being not born till near an hundred Years after. Finding me quite thunderſtruck at this Diſcovery, and utterly unable to make any Reply, he dropped the Argument, and I very reſpectfully took my Leave.—But, meeting him by chance ſince, he told me, that he had taken the Pains to procure a Certificate of *Cromwell*'s Age from the Pariſh Regiſter at *Huntingdon*, where he was born, from whence it appears that he was born in the Year 1599; whereas the Reformation was in the Beginning of that Century. He concluded with ſome very judicious Remarks upon the Negligence and Temerity of our *Engliſh* Hiſtorians, in falling into ſo palpable an Error, which he intended to confute upon a proper Occaſion.—Theſe two curious Subjects the gentle Reader may poſſibly find largely and circumſtantially handled in the aforeſaid Collection.

The Improvements in natural Knowledge that have been made by ſeveral Virtuoſo's of our Family, are too conſiderable to be overlooked or deſpiſed by equitable Judges and Lovers of Learning. How many natural Curioſities have been neglected, by the unphiloſophical Herd, as Trifles not worth their Knowledge, had not we, by incredible Application and Suc-

ceſs, reſcued them from the Contempt of the Illiterate and Ignorant, and thereby drawn the Attention and Admiration of the Learned both on them and ourſelves? *Inſects*, *Reptiles*, *Vermin*, *Animalcules of all Sorts*, *Flowers*, *Plants*, *Minerals*, *Moſſes*, *Shells*, *Pebbles*, &c. which had long been deſpiſed and trampled on, by every illiterate Booby, as common Graſs or Stones in the Highway, have been, by our united Labours, diſcovered, diſſected, improved, and poliſhed, and recommended, in many ingenious Diſſertations, to the Notice and Eſteem of all true Lovers of curious Learning. Some very uncommon Diſcoveries in the Anatomy of Snails and Spiders, made by our late learned Kinſman Sir *Nicholas Gimcrack*, Knt. and his learned and worthy Aſſociate Dr. *Johannes Elſcrikius*, will ſoon be publiſhed in ſome Form or other, being of too much Conſequence to be loſt or neglected.

I had like to have forgot one Article, in which we juſtly glory, and defy the whole World to invalidate our Title; and that is, the great Number of *very pretty Poets* we have produced in all Ages, more in Proportion (I dare ſay) than an hundred to one of any other Family, whoſe Names at leaſt, if not their Labours, will, by the peculiar Felicity of our Family, be rendered immortal by thoſe very Means by which that *Hypercritical Cenſor Pope* endeavoured to ſuppreſs and deſtroy them. We had once a Thought of publiſhing ſome ſelect Pieces in the above-mentioned Collection; but as we find, among our Friends, a much greater Number than was expected, and alſo equally valuable, that it is hard to know to which to give the Preference, we are come to a Reſolution to publiſh the Whole by Subſcription, in about thirty Pocket

Volumes, under the Title of *Minaſculorum Poetarum Opuſcula, Latina & Anglica.* By which many a wonderful Performance will be preſerved, that elſe had never ſeen the Light; and foraſmuch as ſome are ſo exceeding modeſt, as not to have the Author's Name prefixed, we ſhall endeavour to aſſign to every Production the true Name of the Parent, and give them the Honour due to their Labours. And, for the better completing this Deſign, we have employed ſeveral of our Friends to make Collections of all the *Lilliputian* Odes, Epigrams, Anagrams, and Poſeys for Snuff-boxes and Wedding-rings, and all the Wit that can be picked up at *Bath*, the Hot-wells, *Tunbridge*, and *Scarborough*, and all the great Inns upon the Roads leading to the great Metropolis, from the brilliant Performances of fine Fingers, Diamond Rings, or Pencils upon Glaſs, to the ſmutty Labours of Charcoal and Black-lead upon the Walls of Ale-houſes, Tap-houſes, and Bog-houſes, and other Places of public Reſort, and eaſy Converſation. And as we are under great and ſpecial Obligations to that worthy and excellent Perſon Mr. *Edmund Curl*, Citizen and Bookſeller, for the many Years good and faithful Services he has been doing to our Family, we have agreed to give him all the Profits ariſing from the ſaid Subſcription, *&c.* for the Term of ſeven Years, the Property of the Copy being ſecured in the Hands of ſuch Truſtees as ſhall reſerve the future Profits in Bank, to be a perpetual Fund for the decayed Wits and ſuperannuated Poets of our Family. And as we have Reaſon to hope, from the Names and Intereſts of ſome of the Authors, who are Perſons of *Quality* and *Diſtinction*, that it will be one of the largeſt Sub-

ſcriptions that has been ſet on foot for ſome Years paſt: We propoſe, if the Funds will anſwer, to erect a commodious Building, either in *Grub-ſtreet* or *Moor-fields*, for their Reception; where they may retire from the Sneers and Cenſures of an ill-judging World, and ſpend the Remainder of their Days in Peace and Plenty.—So much for our *Learning*.

Give me leave now, my Lord, to come to the Article of *Religion*, in which we have ſome Merit to plead, and ſome Title to your Lordſhip's Encouragement and Protection. We all agree that that Learning which does not terminate in a Religion of ſome Sort or other, is at beſt but a *ſplendid Ignorance*; that nothing can make us truly wiſer, that does not make us really better; and that the Peace and Intereſt of the Public, and the Quiet and Proſperity of Civil Society, is and ought to be the only End of all religious Inſtitutions. Now, as all Mankind have took it into their Heads to have a Religion of one Sort or other, ſo it has been Matter of Grief and Complaint, that the Diſputes and Controverſies about it have often produced very tragical Effects, not only to the Detriment of private Perſons, but to the endangering the Peace and Safety of Civil Societies. No Man that has been ever ſo little converſant in Hiſtory, can pretend to be ignorant how many Perſecutions, Maſſacres, Plots, Battles, and Aſſaſſinations he has read of for the Sake (upon the Pretence at leaſt) of *Religion*, and an outragious Zeal for ſome diſtinguiſhing Doctrines and Opinions, ſome different Forms or Objects of Worſhip, which have produced tragical Effects in all Ages and Nations, whether *Gentile*, *Jewiſh*, or *Chriſtian*. Now what can be a greater Good to Man-

kind; what can contribute more to the preſerving the Peace of Civil Society, than to ſet Men right in theſe Inquiries, to remove theſe Illuſions, detect thoſe Impoſtures, and correct thoſe Errors that have ſo long been the Cauſes of ſo much Diſſention and Confuſion in the World. And this (I am bold to ſay) is an Honour reſerved for our Times, and for our Family, which we claim to ourſelves againſt all Competitors.

Miſtake me not, my Lord, we do not pretend to oppoſe Religion in general; that would be a fruitleſs Attempt. The World is ſo invincibly prejudiced in Favour of an old Superſtition, that much the Majority will ſtill profeſs and defend it in ſome ſhape or other. Our Buſineſs, therefore, is to ſhew the good People of *Britain*, that provided they profeſs ſome Sort of Religion, the particular Sort or Kind is a Matter of very little or no Conſequence, not worth contending about to the Diſturbance of Civil Society, or the Prejudice of our own Intereſt. *They that will have a* May-pole, *ſhall have a* May-pole; and they that will not, may let it alone.

A Religion (as I ſaid before) of ſome Sort or other has ſo long been the Faſhion, that I imagine it cannot eaſily be rooted out, but will ſtill continue to have a ſtrange Influence, upon the Belief at leaſt, if not the Practice, of the ſilly ſuperſtitious Vulgar, though People of *Senſe* and *Figure* ſhould all agree to diſbelieve it; but then we have contrived to take off the Edge, to weaken the Influence, to abate the Terrors, and prevent the ill Effects of it, by repreſenting it in its true Light as a Matter of mere Indifference or Convenience, of which a Man may take juſt as much as he pleaſes, and leave the reſt; and ſo many profeſs

feſs and practiſe ſo much as he ſhall think fit and convenient for his temporal Intereſt, and leave the reſt of the World at liberty to do the ſame. And if it ſhould happen that the Government, under which he lives, ſhould think it worth their while to interpoſe in an Affair of ſo little Conſequence, it would be a Point of Prudence and Duty, as well as Intereſt and good Manners, to profeſs ſuch a Creed, and no other, as they ſhall think fit to eſtabliſh; and to recommend or oppoſe, condemn or practiſe, whatever they ſhall think fit to condemn or approve under the Names of Vice and Virtue, Truth and Error; which, let me tell your Lordſhip, will be an unſpeakable Eaſe to weak Heads, and tender Conſciences, which, I humbly preſume, are ſometimes found in Courts, as well as other Places.

Now, as nothing has contributed more to the Support of this religious Phrenzy, than an Opinion of its being founded on a Revelation from Heaven, which has been the conſtant Pretence of every Sort of Religion that ever appeared in the World; ſo we aſſure ourſelves nothing can more effectually weaken its Authority, than to deſtroy or weaken that Pretence, by ſhewing the weak and inconcluſive Reaſonings, the impoſſible Facts, the unintelligible Doctrines, as they appear to us, and the various Readings in the ſeveral Copies of that Book, on which we Chriſtians (as a Man may ſay) pretend to found our Religion.—This is a Point that we have laboured with good Succeſs. And as *the Religion of Nature*, which we have ſubſtituted in its room, is a Scheme much more palatable to Fleſh and Blood, as it takes off thoſe unnatural Reſtraints which the vulgar Notions of Religion have

impoſed upon merry Hearts and ſanguine Conſtitutions, and leaves Men at full liberty to follow their own natural Inclinations, no wonder that we make numberleſs Converts among the chearful, ſenſible, brilliant Part of Mankind; and, by their Influence and Example, among all Ranks and Orders of their Inferiors.—To all which I might add, that one of our Family, ſome Years ago, publiſhed a very uſeful and learned Treatiſe; I have forgot the Title, but the Deſign of it was, to demonſtrate the Proportion in which the Evidence and Credibility of all Hiſtories and Traditions decreaſes with the Length of their Continuance, ſo as at laſt to be intirely loſt.—The Application is eaſy, the Book was well received, and the Author well rewarded; being, for that and ſome other good Services to Religion and Learning, promoted to a *Dignity* which had not been filled with one of our Family for many Generations.

Yet, in ſpite of our united Endeavours and great Succeſs, ſo ſtrong is the Force of religious Prejudice, there are Numbers who ſtill pertinaciouſly adhere to the old hum-drum Syſtems of Faith and Manners; we have, therefore, with good Succeſs, employed ſome of our ableſt Heads and beſt Pens, to pull off the myſterious Dreſs, to reduce its affected Sublimities, bold Hyperboles, and ſtrong Metaphors to the ſober Standard of plain Reaſon, common Senſe, and *common Forms and Rules of ſpeaking upon the like Occaſions*.—Every body knows what terrible Diſputes and Contentions have reigned for many Ages about what we call the *Chriſtian Sacraments*. How many Volumes have been written, Battles fought, and Lives loſt, to decide a Queſtion concerning the Baptiſm of Infants in one Sacrament, and the Mode

of

of the Divine Preſence in the other? How many hard Words, ſuch as *Tranſubſtantiation*, *Conſubſtantiation*, &c. have been coined to explain a Doctrine which both Sides, in their turn, have owned to be inexplicable? To put an End to theſe fatal Diſputes, and to deliver thinking Men from the Perplexities on both Sides of theſe Queſtions, we declare freely to thoſe who are inclined to receive it, that they are Queſtions of no Moment, a mere Strife of Words, a Contention about nothing, in which neither our Duty nor Happineſs are any way concerned. But if any Scruples yet remain among the Ignorant and Superſtitious, as to the Neceſſity of the Thing itſelf, as an Article of Church Communion, we farther declare, that the firſt, that of Baptiſm, (if it ſhould be thought neceſſary) may be adminiſtered at any Age, or by any Perſon, as well by the Midwife or the Nurſe, as by the Rector or the Curate.—And as for the other, we declare that the Difficulties are all of our own making, by turning a plain Matter of Fact into an unintelligible Myſtery.

THE PLAIN ACCOUNT is this: We are told in the Bible, that ſomething more than 1700 Years ago, there lived, in *Judea*, a very good Sort of a Man, who ſet himſelf to oppoſe the Superſtition of the Country, and to introduce among them a new Syſtem of Religion or moral Virtue; which, conſidering the Purity of its Doctrines, and the Greatneſs of its Rewards, is generally allowed to be the very beſt that ever appeared in the World, excepting ſome few unreaſonable Severities, and unnatural Prohibitions and Reſtraints, which People of Senſe and Breeding know how to diſpenſe with on proper Occaſions; the Freedom

Freedom with which he reproved the Vices of all Profeſſions and Characters, particularly the Pride and Hypocriſy of the Prieſts, the *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*, provoked all their Rage and Indignation againſt him, inſomuch that they were determined to get rid of him at any rate. They firſt accuſed him of *Blaſphemy*, for which, by their Law, he ought to die; but, as they had not the Power of Life and Death, they could make nothing of it that way: They then came to a Reſolution to murder him; but were afraid of the People, who had a high Eſteem and Reverence for him, on Account of his Doctrines, and the many good Works he wrought among them; at laſt they prevailed upon the *Roman* Governor, partly by Threats, and partly by Inſinuations of treaſonable Practices againſt the State, to condemn him to die, in ſpite of his own Conviction, and repeated Profeſſions of his Innocence. A little before his Execution he convened his Diſciples and Followers, and, in a very ſenſible and affecting Speech, confirmed the Doctrines that he had taught them, and left it, as his dying Requeſt, that whenever they met together as a Society, they would never fail *to drink to the immortal Memory of their Maſter*. Now this is the Short and Long of the whole Matter; this is all there is in it.—But to make it a neceſſary Duty, or Part of religious Worſhip; *to imagine that there is any Promiſe in Scripture, annexing a Benefit to the Uſe of it, eſpecially that of Remiſſion of Sins, has this peculiar Abſurdity in it, that it deſtroys the very Notion of Remembrance, which is the Eſſence of it; to make it, therefore, the actual Partaking of any Benefits which we were only commanded to remember, is altering the Nature of it, as much as actual partaking of*

any

any thing is different from remembering it.—Now this I take to be a very PLAIN ACCOUNT of the Matter, which *plainly* deſtroys at once all the puzzling Conſequences ariſing from the vulgar Superſtition about it, which was certainly calculated for nothing elſe but to ſerve certain political Purpoſes, for the Support of Orthodoxy, Uniformity, and Prieſtcraft. As it has long been uſed as a Teſt for Admittance into civil as well as ſacred Offices, and a neceſſary Qualification for obtaining the higheſt Poſts of Honour and Profit both in Church and State, none could conſiſtently be admitted into them but ſtaunch Orthodox Believers of the Myſtery, or abſolute Atheiſts. So long as a Man could be perſuaded to believe that an unbelieving Impenitent was an *unworthy Receiver*, and, as ſuch, was eating and drinking his own Damnation (or Condemnation) he might naturally be under ſome Terrors in performing an Action abſolutely neceſſary to his Advancement in the World: But when he is told by thoſe who may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to underſtand it, that there is nothing more in it than a *grateful Remembrance* of a great and good Benefactor, who made it his dying Requeſt to all his Friends and Diſciples, any Man of common Senſe, Gratitude, and Honour, may ſafely and conſiſtently join in performing it, whatever his private Sentiments and Notions of Religion may be on other Accounts.—Now this is directly pulling down thoſe unreaſonable Fences, Encloſures, and Partition-walls, which were intended to engroſs the Bleſſings of Wealth and Power in particular Hands, to confine them to certain Opinions, Ways of Thinking, and Manner of Living, which are not in every body's Power. People muſt and will believe

believe and practiſe as they pleaſe, in ſpite of all your Creeds and Commandments; and, ſo long as they are willing and able to ſerve themſelves and the Public, they ought to meet with no *Difficulties or Diſcouragements* to deter them from it.—So much for this uſeful and important Diſcovery, which is intirely *our own.*

Theſe, we may venture to pronounce, were great and uſeful Improvements for the Peace and Benefit of Mankind, and the Comforts of civil Society; but we had greater and more extenſive Deſigns for the public Good, had the World been worthy of them, and given the Authors proper Encouragement. There was a great and excellent Perſon of our Family, one Mr. *Aſgill*, well known to the World by his political Writings. O my Lord! he was a fine Man, and an excellent Scholar; he had, it ſeems, by much Labour and Study, found out an infallible Remedy *againſt Death.* He himſelf was verily perſuaded and convinced that though, for ſo many Ages, People had got a Trick of dying from Generation to Generation, yet they might help it if they would. That it was intirely owing to a vicious Imitation, a ridiculous Compliance with a prevailing Faſhion, a falſe Modeſty, or a Want of Faith and Courage, that even People of Senſe would ſuffer themſelves to be teazed and perſecuted by Phyſicians, Apothecaries, Parſons, and old Women, and at laſt, to be delivered to Undertakers, to be ſhoved out of the World with their Heels foremoſt. He at firſt propoſed to keep the Secret to himſelf, or at leaſt preſerve it as a *Family Noſtrum*, dreading, no doubt, the Contempt and Jokes of the deluded Multitude, and the vigorous Oppoſition of the Doctor and the Parſon, who would not fail to oppoſe a Project,

by

by which they must both expect to be Sufferers, as the one would no longer be paid for killing, nor the other for burying; not to mention the *Worshipful Company* of Upholders, Parish-Clerks, Sextons, Grave-diggers, and all the other numerous Retainers to those whimsical Solemnities; but as he had the Honour to be a Member of the *English* House of Commons (for *Bramber* in *Sussex*, I think) an Assembly famous all the World over for unbiassed Integrity, unblemished Honour, and public Spirit, he scorned to be influenced by any Considerations of personal Interest or Credit, but boldly determined to sacrifice both to the Welfare of Mankind, and the Good of his Country. In Pursuance of this laudable and generous Resolution, in the Year 1700, he published his Scheme for the Satisfaction of the Curious with this Title of

AN

ARGUMENT,

PROVING

That, according to the Covenant of eternal Life revealed in the Scripture, Men may be transslated from hence into that eternal Life, without passing through Death, &c.

He was so fully convinced of the Truth and Utility of his Scheme, that he disdained the popular Arts of engaging the Attention, and captivating the Affections of his Readers, by an artful Address to their Passions,

or

or to decoy them by a plauſible Train of Reaſoning into an unexpected Concluſion. No.—He opened his Packet, and let them into the whole Secret at once, that his Readers might know what they had to truſt to; that if a Man found in himſelf no Inclination to die, he might be furniſhed with ſufficient Directions how to avoid it; but if any were ſo cowardly, or ſo modeſt, as to chooſe rather to die, than break an old Cuſtom, or be out of the Faſhion, they might take it for their Pains, and have no body to blame but themſelves.—Thus he begins:

Ante obitum fœlix nemo ſupremaque fata, *is a Fiction of the Poets, and that old Motto worn upon Tombſtones,* Death is the Gate of Life, *is a Lye, by which Men decoy one another into Death, taking it to be a Thoroughfare into eternal Life, whereas it is juſt ſo far out of the Way.* (p. 10.) *I am not unaware that the Cuſtom of the World to die has gained ſuch a Prevalency over our Minds, by prepoſſeſſing us of the Neceſſity of Death, that it ſtands ready to ſwallow my Argument whole without digeſting it; therefore* (p. 11.) *I'll offer an Anſwer to the Cuſtom of the World againſt me: Cuſtom itſelf, without a Reaſon for it, is only an Argument to Fools. Nor can the Life or Death of one Man be aſſigned as the Cauſe of the Life and Death of another Man, unleſs the ſame Thing happen to them both.*

Abraham *is dead, and the Prophets are dead.—What then? Why* Abraham *died of Age (as the Folk call it) and the Prophets were many of them knocked on the Head. —Muſt it therefore follow that either of theſe Deaths muſt happen to me, or, becauſe they died of one Death, I muſt die of another?—Suppoſe my Mother died in Child-bed, muſt I therefore do ſo too? or becauſe my Father was hanged,*

hanged, muſt I therefore be drowned?—Abraham *is dead, and the Prophets are dead; What then?—Why* Abraham *had a Son of his own begetting at one hundred Years old upon a Woman of ninety, had an Army of Men born in his Houſe, Flocks and Herds without Number, and a whole Country to feed them in. And the Prophets were Favourites of Heaven, could raiſe the Dead, and kill the Living. Muſt, therefore, any of theſe Gifts happen to me? Why then, if I muſt not partake with* Abraham *and the Prophets in their Bleſſings, why muſt I partake with them in their Deaths? Nor did* Abraham *die, becauſe the Prophets died; nor did the Prophets die, becauſe* Abraham *died. Then if their Deaths had no Effect upon each other, why ſhould they have any Effect upon me? Therefore the Cuſtom of the World to die, is no Argument one way or other.*—What a glorious Scheme is this! how clearly ſtated! how demonſtratively proved!—What Reward could be too great for ſuch an inquiſitive Genius, ſuch a generous Heart!—But ſee the Event.—No ſooner did this curious, elaborate, uſeful Work appear, but People of all Profeſſions took the Alarm; the Clergy were angry, the Phyſicians were merry, and the reſt of the World ſided with them; inſomuch that, in a ſhort Time, he and his Scheme became the Jeſt and Abhorrence of all Converſation. *The Houſe of Commons*, of which (as I ſaid before) he had the Honour to be a Member, and who had, upon all proper Occaſions, diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their Attention to every uſeful Project, and Indulgence to the Projector, quickly convinced him of their Diſlike, and that he had no more Favour to expect within-doors than he had found without; ſo that, inſtead of receiving the Thanks of the Ho-

nourable

nourable Houſe, or an Addreſs to the Throne for ſome gainful Office, or a good Penſion for Life, or ſo much as a Patent to ſecure to himſelf and his Friends all the Honour and Profit that might reaſonably be expected from ſuch a public Service, he met with no other Reward than Cenſure and Expulſion.—The good old Man was ſo thoroughly mortified by this unworthy Treatment, that he could not overcome it; and though he had often declared to his Friends in private, as well as publicly to the World, that *he never would die* in Complaiſance to any Cuſtom, Perſuaſion, or Party whatſoever, and that if ever he ſhould be ſo ſilly, that *he died of no Religion.* (p. 95.) yet at laſt he gravely reſolved to die, rather than live any longer in ſuch an ungrateful Nation; and ſo he actually did, without leaving his invaluable Secret behind him, to the great Grief and Diſappointment of all ſerious and thinking Men, and irreparable Loſs to Poſterity—The barbarous Treatment of this uſeful public-ſpirited Man has obliged us to keep our moſt *abſtruſe Noſtrums* to ourſelves, and deal only in ſuch popular and obvious Notions as are level to the Capacity of the Bulk of Readers. Such as *Superſtition*, *Enthuſiaſm*, *Creed-makers*, *Prieſt-craft*, *Bigottry*, *Pious Frauds*, *Oracles of Reaſon*, *Natural Religion*, &c. by which we ſtill keep up the Cry, and ſupport our Friends, who, in ſpite of all Endeavours to conceal it, are by much the Majority in all Societies.

The Diſputes about the different Forms of *Church Government*, *Sacerdotal Powers*, *Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline*, and twenty other appendant Articles, have been, for above two hundred Years, the Subject of much Contention, and the Occaſions of much Confuſion and Miſchief.

Miſchief. How much Blood has been ſpilt, how many Outrages committed even in this Nation upon this unconcerning Queſtion? Upon this Head therefore we freely declare, that *The Civil Magiſtrate is the ſole Fountain of all Power*; that there is no Kind or Branch of Power or Juriſdiction really diſtinct from it; and though in Compliance with Cuſtom and antient Uſage we have agreed to diſtinguiſh betwixt *Spiritual* and *Temporal* Power, and *Eccleſiaſtical* and *Civil* Authority; yet they rather take theſe Names from the Perſons by whom they are exerciſed, or the Subjects on which they are employed, than from the Fountain from whence they are derived: That the three Orders (as they are called) of *Spiritual Magiſtrates* or Governors of the Church, are in reality as much the Creatures of the *State*, as the Officers of the *Fleet* and *Army*, and as much determined by the Conditions and Limitations of their Charter, as *The Lord-Mayor*, *Court of Aldermen*, and *Common Council*. Now we reaſonably and conſiſtently conclude, that whoever commits a Truſt, beſtows a Commiſſion, or communicates a Power, has an abſolute Right to determine the Uſes of that Truſt, the Services of that Commiſſion, and the Exerciſe of that Power, eſpecially if theſe Uſes and Services were expreſsly ſpecified as the abſolute Conditions of beſtowing and receiving the ſaid Truſt, Offices, or Powers — This is the univerſal Voice of Reaſon and Nature, from the ſupreme Magiſtrate to the loweſt Operator in Wood or Iron, Stone or Clay, who, if they purchaſe Tools of any Sort, raiſe Fabrics, erect Poſts or Pillars, certainly intend them for Uſe or Ornament, or both; and if from an unſkilful Choice of Materials, or the Ignorance of Artificers, they cannot be brought to an-

ſwer the ſeveral Uſes and Purpoſes for which they were intended, and cannot poſſibly be ſo mended as to become either uſeful or ornamental, they are either pulled down, or left to ſtand uſeleſs and neglected Monuments of their own Perverſeneſs, or the Builder's Folly.—Thus, for inſtance, ſuppoſe a Man were only to ſet up a Weathercock, or build a Windmill, which ſaid Weathercock, or Windmill, ſhould be ſo injudiciouſly fixed or put together as to grow ſtiff or ruſty, move heavily or not at all, or have an irregular Motion of its own, quite oppoſite to the Deſign of the Builder, there is no doubt to be made, that they ſhould undergo ſuch Corrections and Amendments from more ſkilful Operators, as ſhould effectually quicken, direct, and regulate, their Motions for the future, or let them ſtand uſeleſs and immoveable for ever.—The Application, in ſhort, is no more than this, that whoſoever accepts any Truſt, Office, or Power, is bound by all the Laws of Juſtice and Prudence to exerciſe that Truſt, and employ that Power for the ſole Uſe and Benefit, and by the ſole Direction of ſuch Perſon or Perſons from whom he acknowledges and profeſſes, he received them; which muſt neceſſarily produce an Uniformity of Conduct and abſolute Submiſſion to their Patrons, Superiors, and Directors, and prevent all that Oppoſition and Confuſion that muſt ariſe from acting without or againſt ſuch Direction, upon the Preſumption of private Judgment, Perſuaſion, or any pretended Scruples or Principles whatſoever; and that on uniform Submiſſion and Obedience, and Unanimity of Conduct, the Peace and Harmony of Societies depend, who can deny? This is therefore the ſhorteſt Way of ſolving ſeveral Difficulties, and reconciling ſeveral Contradictions,

dictions, which can on no other Principles be explained or underſtood.

But our Abilities in Controverſy are never ſo effectually diſplayed, as when the Debate lies intirely between ourſelves. We give and take, and chooſe to allow any thing to ſhorten the Diſpute, and conſent to cut the Knot, which cannot, without Difficulty, be untied. A remarkable Inſtance of this I remember, upon a Queſtion of the laſt Conſequence, betwixt an honeſt *North Briton*, a Doctor of Phyſic and Profeſſor of Botany, and a *Jew* who taught *Hebrew* in the ſame Univerſity. They were a Couple of merry Fellows, and dear Bottle-Companions. As they were rejoicing one Night over a Bottle of old Port, ſays the Doctor, *Dear Rabbi, thou art an honeſt Heart, I love thee dearly; but I ſhould love thee better, if thou wert of my Religion. Why* (quoth the Rabbi) *I fancy there is no great Difference betwixt thy Religion and mine, if we were to come to an Explanation. Why* (ſays the Doctor) *thou art no Chriſtian. No,* (ſaid he) *but if you could give me a good Reaſon for my Converſion, you ſhall find me very ready to ſubmit to it.* Upon which the Doctor calls for a Bible, and reads him ſeveral Paſſages out of the *New Teſtament. But* (ſays the Rabbi) *this is no Argument to us* Jews, *who do not acknowledge your* New Teſtament. Upon which, the good Doctor, ſtarting with Horror and Surprize, cries, *How!— What! dare you deny our* New Teſtament! *Yes,* (ſays the *Jew.) Why then,* (ſays he, with a vehement Oath) *by —— I deny your* Old. *It is all Lies and Nonſenſe. I have lately read a Story there of* Sampſon *killing a thouſand Men with the Jaw-bone of an Aſs.— The Jaw-bone of a T——. To be ſure, it is as great a Lie as ever was told.*

Their Arguments were now at an End, they looked gravely at each other for about a Minute, when the Doctor taking the Rabbi by the Hand, *Come*, (ſays he) *we are both honeſt Men and good Friends, What ſignifies diſputing? Let us have the other Bottle and to pay.* So ſaid, ſo done. They drank off their Bottle, parted good Friends, and never had the leaſt Diſpute or Queſtion about Religion ever after. See here a Controverſy that had divided the World ſo many hundred Years, and produced ſo many thouſand Volumes, compromiſed at once with no other Conſequence than *t'other Bottle and to pay.* Could every religious Diſpute be ſo eaſily decided, we ſhould quickly be all of a Mind, and all the World of one Religion.

Another Time I remember we were at a Family Club, which was kept at the *Bull-Head* in the *Borough*, (which ſome People of more Wit than Manners, in Contempt of our Family, uſed to call the *Calves-Head-Club*;) one of the Company, who affected to be thought wiſer and better than the reſt, begun to talk about *Religion*, upon which his next Neighbour interrupted him. *Prithee, Peter*, (ſays he) *don't thee pretend to talk about Religion, I am ſure thou knoweſt nothing of the Matter. I will lay thee a Guinea thou canſt not ſay the Lord's Prayer. Done!* ſays the other; and up he gets, and with an audible Voice repeats the Creed from the Beginning to the End, without miſſing a ſingle Word. Upon which his Adverſary, lifting up his Hands in great Surprize, *Well*, (ſaid he) *I did not imagine he could have done it, but I fairly own I have loſt my Wager, to which the whole Company aſſented.* Now, had this happened in any other Company, ten to one but it had produced another

another Wager, or a Quarrel, or perhaps a Duel; but we put a Stop to any further Explanation, by declaring one and all, that as we met together purely to be merry, *Talking, especially about Religion, did but spoil Company.*

If, on *these* Considerations, we have any Merit to plead, we have greater yet behind. *Politics* are our Master-piece: And I will venture to affirm, that our present Posterity, Wealth, and Power, by which we are enabled to hold the Balance, and direct the Counsels of *Europe*, have been intirely owing to the exquisite Foresight, and dextrous Conduct of our Family. It is true, we have long been out of Play, and are universally decried by the late and present Possessors of Power. But let me tell them, that had we not conducted public Measures when we were in Power, by a Set of Maxims, and Rules of Policy, intirely our own, *Great-Britain* had never seen so many *Glorious Treaties, Congresses, Conventions, Negotiations, Alliances, Secret Expeditions, Preventive Measures, Temporary Expedients, Ways and Means,*— &c.— &c.— &c. as are the Glory of the present Age, and will be the Wonder of the next; the blessed Effects of which are too well seen, felt, heard, and understood, to need any further Explanation. I shall only add, what I am able to prove by authentic Evidence, that whatever Laurels have already been, or shall hereafter be, gathered by us or our Posterity, on any Part of the Continent, were planted by the Hands of our *Illustrious Predecessors.* And as it is an undeniable Truth, that he who planted the Tree has more Merit than they that gather the Fruit; and they who sow the Seed, than they who reap the

Crop; ſo the certain Concluſion is this, that whoever wins, or whoever loſes, the Merit and Glory will be intirely our own, and that too with ſome advantageous Circumſtances, which could never have happened in any Hands but ours. It is univerſally agreed, that the Honour of any Action riſes in Proportion to the Difficulty or Danger that attends it; and that a Contempt of Difficulties and Dangers is an Argument of ſuperior Courage, Conduct, or both. He who, from a Contempt of his Enemy, and a juſt Senſe of his own Strength and Courage, gives him unneceſſary Advantages, departs from a good Situation, that the other may poſſeſs himſelf of it, ſupplies him with Money, Ammunition, and Proviſions, and makes him, in every Reſpect, as powerful and formidable as he can, only to have the Pleaſure and Honour of beating him under all theſe Diſadvantages, ſhews a Greatneſs of Soul, and Exceſs of Courage, ſeldom found but in our Family. I remember when I was at School, there was nothing more common than for a brave Lad to fight a contemptible Enemy with one Hand tied behind him; and I remember one who carried the Point of Heroiſm ſo far as to challenge one of equal Strength with both his Hands tied behind him; by which he got ſo hearty a Drubbing, as I dare ſay he will never forget, if he ſhould live to the Age of *Methuſelah*.—There is a Relation of ours, a very honeſt Fellow, one *John Bull*, Grandſon to the famous Man of that Name, whoſe Memoirs are written by one of the beſt Pens in *Europe*. He was bred a *Clothier* in the Weſt of of *England*, was in top Buſineſs, and might, if he pleaſed, have purchaſed the whole Country round him: But he had received

ceived such a Tincture of Heroism from his Mother, who was a *Welsh Heiress*, that, like *Hercules*, he discovered an Inclination for kicking and cuffing even in his Cradle. When he was at School, Cock-fighting and Bull-baiting were his chief Delight; there was not a Wake or a Revel round the Country, where there was any Hope of getting a laced Hat or a broken Head, but he was sure to be at it. If any of his School-fellows had a Quarrel upon their Hands, he always put in to be a *Second*, or rather than fail, to be a *Principal*; so that for seven Years together he scarce ever slept in a whole Skin, or ever made a public Appearance without a black Eye, or a Plaister or two upon his Face; and yet in all other Respects he was as honest, a generous, compassionate, good-natured Fellow as ever trod on shoe of Leather. What contributed a good deal to this military Turn, was the Accounts that he had heard and read, and the Monuments he had seen of the Heroes of his Family. There were, it seems, no less than three or four Dozen of laced Hats hung round the Hall which had been won at different Times at Back-Sword, Wrestling, or Boxing by some of his Ancestors; and he could not bear the Thoughts of disgracing his Kindred, especially his *Welsh* Relations, by being less brave and intrepid than they. I cannot omit one merry Adventure that befel *John* in the Beginnings of his Knight-Erranty, which had like to have spoiled him for a Hero ever after: He had been out one Evening a little Pot-valiant, and greatly wanted an Opportunity of shewing his Manhood, and exerting a little of his military Fury upon somebody or other; but as it was late, and the few People he met about the Streets seem-

ed more inclined to go to Bed than to Loggerheads, he could find no room for Adventures; at laſt happening to ſpy a Butcher's Maſtiff lying faſt aſleep at his Maſter's Door, he kneels down, and taking one of his Ears between his Teeth he gave him ſuch a confounded Gripe, that throughly awaked the Dog, who returned the Civility in his way ſo heartily, that Poor *John* was obliged to cry out and alarm the Neighbourhood, who quickly ran to his Aſſiſtance. The rueful Figure he made, covered with Blood and Dirt, and the unſavory Scent that proceeded from a certain Part of his Perſon, produced as much Laughter in ſome as Pity in others; but the ſtinking Hero, whoſe Courage was by this Time pretty well cooled, begins a pitiful ſnivelling Story of the Dog's falling upon him, as he was paſſing quietly through the Streets, and how unjuſtifiable a Thing it was that ſuch a Dog ſhould be ſuffered to run looſe about the Streets in the Night. *The ſame Thing* (quoth *John*) *might have happened to any of you as well as to me.* To which they all aſſented, and the poor Cur was immediately truſſed up for a Breach of the Peace, whilſt *John* ſneaked Home to get Plaiſters and clean Linen.

When he firſt came into Trade, he had the faireſt Opportunity of making a great Fortune, and raiſing a great Eſtate, that any Man of his Circumſtances ever had: But his Neighbours, who envied his Proſperity, and knew his blind Side, were perpetually blowing up his natural Vanity, and flattering his military Pride, in order to make their own Advantage, by his neglecting the proper Buſineſs of his own Profeſſion; which they effectually did, and have been every Day improving, to the Ruin of *his* Fortune, and

and the completing of their *own*. Within a few Years, there was public Notice given in ſome of the News-Papers, of a great Trial at Back-ſword for ſomething about the Value of *a Crown*, or ſome ſuch Matter; but it was in a ſtrange Country, a great Way off, where *John* had no more perſonal or family Concern, than at *Bagdat*, or *Jeruſalem*. But when Honour calls, even *Love* itſelf (much more the paultry Articles of *Trade* and *Intereſt*) muſt give way. He could not reſiſt the Call; he mortgaged his Eſtate, pulled down the greateſt Part of his Looms, and diſcharged the greateſt Part of his Workmen, only leaving ſome few to keep up the Face of Buſineſs, and prevent any Suſpicions of his being quite gone off, and away goes he.— He entered the Ring among the reſt; and after many a ſore Bang, was ſo lucky as to win the Prize; which, with his wonted Generoſity, he beſtowed upon one of the Combatants, who pronounced him the braveſt Lad that ever appeared upon the Field, and made him a Preſent of half a Dozen Silk Handkerchiefs; which, like the Standards in *Weſtminſter-Hall*, are hung round his Bed-chamber, as the Monuments of his tranſcendent Courage, Generoſity, and Wiſdom. In his Abſence, you may imagine, all Things went to wreck at home; ſome of his Labourers were hanged, ſome tranſported, and a great many taken into the Service of his Neighbours, who had not neglected ſo fair an Opportunity of worming him almoſt out of every Branch of his Trade. Several of his Tenants broke, and the Poor Rates, and other Taxes, and the Intereſt upon his Mortgage, eat out the whole Income of his Eſtate. In ſpite of all theſe

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Diſcouragements, he ſuffered not *his noble Courage to be caſt down*, but reſolved to buſtle through it as well as he could, and try to repair his Loſſes by ſtriking into ſome new Branch of Trade, or recovering the old. The Perſon, who thought himſelf injured in this Affair, bore *John* a ſecret Grudge ever ſince, and did him many private ill Offices, which his honeſt Heart could never believe to be intended, and therefore ought not to be returned, whilſt all the Forms and Expreſſions of *Cordiality* were punctually kept up between them. However, at laſt he found out that he had in many Inſtances been very ill uſed by his well-bred ceremonious Neighbour, and ſent him Word that he ſhould take a proper Time and Manner of ſhewing his Reſentment of ſuch treacherous Conduct.— But being informed that the poor Devil was half-ſtarved with Hunger and Cold, and not able to make a manly Reſiſtance, but muſt tamely and cowardly be knocked o' the Head, if he were not in better Plight before they came to a Tryal of Skill; *Honeſt John*, who had the Heart of an Emperor, and was not more ſtout than merciful, ſcorned to take any ungenerous Advantages even of an Enemy; he thought there was no Honour to be got by drawing upon a naked Man, demoliſhing a Man of Clouts, or killing an Enemy that was already half-killed to his Hands; he therefore generouſly ſent him as much *Wool* as would cloath himſelf and his Family for a hundred Generations; and for fear he ſhould not know what to do with it when he had got it, he ſent him ſome of his beſt Workmen to manage it for him to the beſt Advantage; and at the ſame time ſent him great Quantities of Proviſions of all Sorts, ſuch as

Wheat,

Wheat, Beef, Pork, Butter, *&c.* to feed and fatten him for the Slaughter, that he might be worth killing. At the ſame time that this cunning artful Perſon was ſo generouſly treated by his Adverſary, he affected to be thought very ſenſible of the Obligation, which he endeavoured to acknowledge by making ſome Preſents in Return. But what were they? Why, truly, ſome choice Liquors which were to be taken by Way of Drams, which he knew would intoxicate and enervate him, in Proportion to his own Increaſe of Strength and Vigour; and ſome flimſy Pieces of Silk to make Cloaths and Pincuſhions for his Wife and Daughters, which he was ſure would turn their Heads by flattering their Vanity, and put them out of Love with their own home-ſpun Manufactures, by which they employed their poor Neighbours, and inriched themſelves.— He reckons that in a few Months Time, they ſhall be pretty equally matched; and then he has given him to underſtand, he muſt expect to hear from him in a proper Manner. He propoſes to give him at firſt a handſome Breathing, and a fair Opportunity of ſhewing his Dexterity and Courage to the beſt Advantage; then, to ſhew his Contempt of his Enemy, and his own ſuperior Strength and Cunning, he deſigns to throw away his Arms, and knock him down with his Fiſt, with as much Eaſe, and in as ſhort a Time, as a hungry Man could ſwallow a poached Egg or an Oyſter. So done, he will have him embowelled and embalmed upon the Spot, and then bring him home in Triumph, to be ſhewn as a Sight, whilſt the Thing is a Novelty, and then to be ſet up like an *Egyptian* Mummy in a Glaſs-caſe at the upper

upper End of his Dining-room, to be a perpetual Memorial of his Wiſdom and Valour to all Generations.

His Friends, who know the honeſt Fellow's romantic Turn, adviſe him to ſtick to his Buſineſs and let him alone. But he, like a true Hero, juſtly and bravely replies, Shall it ever be ſaid, that the Grandſon of *the Illuſtrious John Bull* prefers the ignominious Eaſe and Indolence of Peace, before the glorious Toils of War, and Trophies of Victory! Is it not the Voice of the whole Nation, that there is more real Glory in a laced Hat and Cockade, and a Regimental Dreſs, even with an Empty Pocket, than in the plain homely Dreſs of the richeſt Clothier in the Country? Do not our wiſe and honourable Repreſentatives in Parliament, do not all the Ladies in *Great-Britain* ſay the ſame? What an inſipid Creature is a plain honeſt Country Gentleman? What an aukward Figure does he cut in a Drawing Room, at a Ball, at an Aſſembly, when compared with the erect Gait, the intrepid Front, the piercing Eye, the elevated Cheſt, the firm Step, the enchanting Air, the irreſiſtible Dreſs of a military Hero? On him ſo terrible, and yet ſo amiable, every lovely Eye is fixed, for him every gentle Heart ſighs, and ſnowy Boſom heaves with Rapture; for him alone the unexperienced Virgins pine, and even amorous old Maids and Widows languiſh. Happy ſhe whom he deigns to diſtinguiſh by a Side Glance; happier ſhe, whom he ſurveys with Attention, to whom he opens his bewitching Mouth or Gold Snuff-Box; but thrice happy ſhe, whom he approaches with Reverence, whoſe tender trembling Hand he gently preſſes, and leads her out tranſported

with

with Joy, and covered with Bluſhes, to be the Miſtreſs of his Charms for that Evening, and the Envy of the whole Circle for that Seaſon. *Is not this true?* (ſays John.) *I therefore declare, that if I had ten thouſand Sons, I would breed them all to the Army; and if I could not find Employment for them at home, I would let them out to Hire* a le mode de Suiſſe, *&c.* Well ſaid! honeſt *John*; well fare thy Heart. Thou wert born a Hero, and art determined to die in thy Calling.— I beg Pardon for dwelling ſo long upon the Hiſtory of this honeſt Fellow, but he is the Miniature of the greateſt Heroes of our Family; for by the ſelf ſame generous, honourable, diſintereſted Maxims are we all directed from the higheſt to the loweſt.——I had many curious and ſecret hiſtorical Remarks upon this Head of *political Conduct*, which I intended to publiſh, but am happily prevented by the judicious Labour of the learned Dr. *Humphrey Jobber*, who has compoſed an uſeful and excellent Treatiſe, which he calls *An Anatomical Diſſection of the Body Politic*, in a Method intirely new, illuſtrated with a great Variety of Copper-Plates: To which will be added, *An Appendix upon Political Architecture*, where the Public may expect ſeveral entertaining and ſurpriſing Diſcoveries. I beg leave to mention only one, the Root and Foundation of an intire new Syſtem.

Your Lordſhip cannot but know, that ſeveral conceited ſyſtematical Writers have aſſerted, that there is a juſt and proper Analogy betwixt *the Body Natural* and *the Body Politic*; that as the firm and regular Structure and Diſpoſition of the Stamina, the Strength and Cleanneſs of the Veſſels, the Purity and Tenuity of the Fluids, their free and uninterrupted Circulation

a ſtrong nervous Syſtem, a due Concoction, Secretion, and Diſtribution of the nutritious Juices into the Habit and Conſtitution, are the Foundation and Support of natural Health and Vigour; ſo ſomething analogous to it would be the Health, the Soundneſs, the Vigour, the Life of the *Body Politic*. Now this ingenious Author has diſcovered this to be all a Miſtake, that there is no Kind of Analogy or Reſemblance whatſoever betwixt the one and the other; but, on the contrary, that that which would be the Life of the one, would be the Deſtruction of the other; that the *Body Politic* could not poſſibly ſubſiſt without certain periodical Paroxyſms, or intermitting Fermentations, for which the State-Phyſicians have an infallible Specific, which operates in the Way of an Opiate or Anodyne Draught; that uncorrupt Juices would be the Death of the Patient; that their eaſy gentle Motion through clear and unobſtructed Paſſages, would certainly produce a Lethargy; and that therefore it is abſolutely neceſſary to keep up a perpetual Ferment in the Blood, and Itch in the Skin, in order to keep the Patient awake, by giving him the perpetual Pleaſure of Scratching. For the ſame Reaſon, ſcorbutic Eruptions, ulcerous, and *eſpecially ſcrophulous* Sores, Fractures, and Diſlocations are in ſome critical Conjunctures abſolutely neceſſary both for the Patient and the Phyſician, as they are Trials of the Goodneſs of his Temper, and the Strength of his Conſtitution, and at the ſame time give Employment and Bread to numberleſs Retainers to the Faculty, who, in a State of abſolute Eaſe and Tranquillity, muſt be forced to take to the Highway, or ſome ſuch-like honourable Employment to keep themſelves from ſtarving.

But

But there is another Advantage of *political Corruption*, which deſerves a very particular Conſideration, *viz.* That the Proſperity and Increaſe of the Body depends upon it. It is a well-known Maxim of Philoſophy, *That the Corruption of one natural Body is the Generation of another*; but, in the political World, the Corruption of one is often the *Generation of Thouſands*. How many *new Laws*, *new Powers*, *new Magiſtrates*, *new Officers*, *new* ——— are produced by every *new Corruption?* Now as all Officers and Magiſtrates, all People of Authority, Rank, and Power in the political Body, are of infinitely more Conſequence to the Public than the common *Herd*, the *Beaſts* of the People, ſo it may, at an Average, be computed, that every Officer, Commiſſioner, or Magiſtrate, eſpecially if he rides in his Coach, and has a Seat in Parliament, is more in Weight and Value than a thouſand *ſturdy Beggars*, or Rabble of Mankind; and if any of theſe ſhould, for their ſpecial Services in *after* Times (for I mean not the preſent Generation) be called up to the other Houſe, and be created your Lordſhip's Peers, they would be in the ſame millecuple Proportion greater, and wiſer, and better than they were before, or could any other ways have been. To this therefore it is intirely owing, that many have been formerly, and will hereafter be, ſhining in Courts, commanding in Armies, and haranguing or voting at leaſt in Senates, who, in an *uncorrupt* Generation, had lived and died in Obſcurity, uſeleſs Members of the Commonwealth, neither regarded whilſt living, nor lamented nor remembered when dead.—But to proceed—An equal Diſtribution of the nutritious Juices, which is the Health and Life of the

natural Body, would, in the *Body politic*, produce an unnatural Equality among the Members, and deſtroy that neceſſary Subordination and Subjection, which, the ignoble owe to their noble and honourable Superiors.—But, the Difference is no-where more obſerveable, than in the Caſe of a *Plethora*, or loaded Habit. This, in the *Natural Body*, is always attended by Wearineſs, Oppreſſion of Spirits, Want of Appetite, and Inclination to vomit, and can only be cured by Evacuations and Abſtinence: But in the *Political*, the Baſe is quite otherwiſe, the Symptoms are intirely different. It is obſervable that the Appetite always increaſes in Proportion; that the Patient, inſtead of being heavy, languid, and unactive, is ten times more active, vigilant, meddling, and inquiſitive, even to a Degree of ſaucy Impertinence; and that to *evacuate or refund* would be next to immediate Death. Were a Phyſician, or even a *Committee of the College*, but to propoſe ſuch a Method of Cure, the very Mention would infallibly throw the Patient into Convulſions, if not a *Deliquium* or Diſtraction, *cum multis aliis*, *&c.*

In the *Appendix upon political Architecture*, there are ſeveral very curious and uſeful Diſcoveries, ſome of which I ſhall briefly touch upon by way of Specimen. In *common Architecture*, every body knows that deep and ſolid Foundations are abſolutely neceſſary for erecting a ſubſtantial and durable Building; that the Materials ſhould be the very beſt in their Kind, and the Workmen the very beſt that could be procured for Love or Money. Particularly in our own Country we ſhould uſe good ENGLISH OAK, good FREE STONE, hewn, ſquared, and put together by FREE and ACCEPTED MASONS;

MASONS; but, in *political* Architecture, this worthy Author has discovered, that the best and cheapest way is to lay the Foundation upon the Surface, that in the *Contignation* (as the learned Doctor calls it) there is no manner of Occasion for Oak, or any such inflexible sturdy Timber; that any *sorry Sticks of Wood*, that are fit for nothing else, may serve quite as well, if they be but pliable, and admit of being bent to any Form or Purpose the Undertaker shall require; that in the Stone-work there is no manner of Occasion for the Expence of Free-Stone, of hewing, or squaring, or dressing; any sort of Stone will do quite as well; nor will any Obliquity of Shape, or Inequality of Surface, make them less useful; all will depend upon their Position, and the Cement that holds them together. He has, by long and repeated Experiments, found out, that *common Dirt*, duly prepared, makes the best Cement in the World, which may be easily tempered into a viscous or glutinous Consistence; that Stones of any Figure, globular or angular, laid deep in such a Bed, fall of course into their proper Places by a sort of magnetic Attraction or Gravitation; and after lying a proper Time in a very warm Sun-shine, without being moved or discomposed by any officious Pretenders to Symmetry, Proportion, and Order, will form a Crust or Stuke like the Walls of *Babylon*, with a Surface as impenetrable as a Crocodile's Skin, a Miser's Heart, or a Whore's Forehead. As therefore the whole Affair lies in collecting and packing Sticks, and Stones, and Dirt together, and that FREE and ACCEPTED MASONS scorn (forsooth) to be employed in such dirty Work, it has been found by Experience, that the

meaneſt and moſt ignorant Labours, not only do it quite as well, but a great deal better.——Both theſe curious Pieces are intended to adorn the above-mentioned Collection.

I fear I have tired your Lordſhip's Patience by this tedious Letter; but humbly beg leave, before I conclude, to do juſtice to the Memory of my ever-honoured Uncle Sir *Francis*, who has been publicly expoſed upon the Stage, as well as in print, to the Laughter and Contempt of People not half ſo wiſe and honeſt as himſelf; and I can hardly forgive our ungrateful Kinſman for ſuch an unnatural Abuſe of his beſt Friends, and neareſt Relations: But, however, as he has, on ſome other Accounts, behaved properly, and done Honour to his Lineage, I ſhall only adviſe him to offend no more, nor crack any of his unſeaſonable Jokes upon thoſe to whom he owes all the Intereſt and Credit he has in the World. I ſhall only endeavour to vindicate the illuſtrious Character which he has abuſed, and ſhew that many of thoſe who pretend to make him and his Family the Subject of their Mirth and Laughter, have acted the very ſame, and ſome of them a more ridiculous Part than he—The plain Fact, in ſhort, was this: As he was a very good-natured honeſt Gentleman, of a chearful Diſpoſition, and ſociable Temper, ſo he affected above all things (as Mrs. *Motherly* tells him) to be *populous* in his Country; and as he took particular Care to have his Cellars well ſtored, no Wonder that *Bumper-Hall* was the conſtant Reſort of all the honeſt merry Fellows, eſpecially of his own Kindred, who, whilſt they were drinking his Liquor, had good Senſe and good Manners enough to applaud his ſuperior

Underſtanding, laugh at his Jokes, and bow low to his Honour. And as People of his tranſcendent Genius and Quality are generally above the low *mercantile* Taſte for Figures and Calculations, and the unpopular Arts of *Oeconomy* and *Frugality*, no Wonder that he hurt his Fortune, and (as himſelf confeſſes) run his Eſtate a little *awt at Elbows*; and in order to mend his Affairs, got himſelf *elected* (*returned* I ſhould ſay, but it is much the ſame thing) to a Seat in Parliament, in hopes of retrieving his Eſtate by ſome beneficial Place or Penſion, for which he was as well qualified as many whom your Lordſhip remembers to have played the ſame Game with better Succeſs.—My Lady, good Woman, was in a different way of thinking; Sots and Drunkards were her Averſion, having always obſerved that they were a muddy thick-ſkulled Generation, without Taſte or Appetite for any earthly Thing beſides. But happening to meet the accompliſhed *Count Baſſet* at *York Races*, ſhe was ſtruck with Admiration at the Sight of a Perſon ſo different from that Race of Animals ſhe had uſed to converſe with; his graceful Perſon, his eaſy Manner, his familiar Addreſs, his flowing Eloquence, his polite Expreſſion inſpired her with ſomething more than common Eſteem for an *illuſtrious Stranger*, who had ſaid more fine Things to her in one Evening, than her dear Sir *Francis* had ſaid in ſeven Years before, or was like to ſay in ſeven Years after. No Wonder, therefore, that ſhe had a longing Deſire to ſee the Place where ſuch *fine Gentlemen* were bred, and where ſhe had Hopes, at the ſame Time, of repairing the Fortune, as well as mending the Manners, of the Family. Miſs *Jenny*, who inherited her Mother's

Taſte, and was improving very faſt upon her Plan, Example, and Inſtruction, was overjoyed to think of changing her Situation, and removing from the unbred Converſation of Country 'Squires, who could talk for Hours together of the Beauties and Excellencies of a favourite Horſe or Dog, whilſt they were utterly inſenſible of thoſe growing Charms which her faithful Glaſs aſſured her would, in a leſs barbarous Country, quickly make her the Admiration of our Sex, and the Envy of her own; not to mention the lively Hope ſhe entertained, that ſome of thoſe tender Things, which the amorous Count was throwing away upon her *Mamma*, might, in a little time, fall to her Share, who better deſerved them, and had a much better Reaſon to expect them.—Whilſt the hopeful 'Squire *Richard*, the Heir Apparent to the Wiſdom and Honours of the Family, came into the Scheme purely *for Fun*, in hopes of ſeeing the *Lions*, and the *Monuments*, and the fine Laſſes, whom he had ſo often heard the well-bred Count toaſt with Rapture.—Now pray, my Lord, what was there in this whole Conduct either criminal or ridiculous? He had as much Zeal and as much Merit as ſome, whom your Lordſhip remembers to have made no ſmall Figure in the World; and if he could have been ſo happy as to do the ſame, who could blame him? But if neither the Diſtreſſes of his Family, his clamorous Debts, the Importunity of his affectionate Spouſe, nor the better Education of his two lovely hopeful Infants, could be thought a ſufficient Juſtification of his Conduct, what ſhall be ſaid for thoſe, who with Fortunes intirely eaſy and ſufficient to anſwer all the rational Purpoſes of Life, have quitted

their paternal Seats and Eſtates, where they might live with Dignity and Eaſe, to dangle for Years together after a Court, doing the Drudgery, and licking the Spittle of every Man in Power, in hopes of procuring — — — they knew not what — — — they knew not when? Now, if ſuch Conduct as this muſt be ridiculed by an impertinent *Play-Writer*, as the diſtinguiſhing Folly of our Family, he will find, to his Confuſion, that we are a more numerous *Corps* than he imagined; and if we ſhould all agree to deſert the Houſe every time his Nonſenſe is acted, I can aſſure him he would have but a thin Audience, and ſcarce receive enough to pay for his Candles. We are (as I ſaid before) not only a numerous Family, but well-allied, and well-ſupported, and particularly remarkable for our inviolable Regard for the Family Intereſt, and inſeparable Attachment to each other; and whoever was fool-hardy enough to provoke us, was ſeldom known to get much by the Bargain. Whoever attempted to be arch and witty upon any one of the Family, might as well have thruſt his Head into a Hornet's Neſt; he was ſure to have us all about his Ears, and to be worried out of his Fame and Patience, if not out of Life. The Cry we were ſure to raiſe upon him, was as loud and extenſive as our united Intereſt could make it; and our Oppoſition to all his Schemes for Promotion and Advancement in the World was ſeldom known to be unſucceſsful. Whereever we had any Degree of Intereſt or Power, eſpecially the Direction of any Society *Eccleſiaſtical* or *Civil*, we are ſure to improve it, by admitting none but *Friends* and *Relations*. Let a Man's Merit be ever

ſo great, his Character ever ſo ſhining in other Reſpects, his Services, his Labours, his Zeal, his Hardſhips, ever ſo extraordinary, if he cannot produce proper Credentials from ſome of our Friends, we are determined never to admit him, leſt he ſhould take it in his Head to interrupt the Peace and Harmony of the Society, and create Schiſms and Diſſentions among us, under the ſpecious Pretence of regulating Diſorders, and reforming Abuſes; by which Means, I think, we ſhall effectually exclude Interlopers and Innovators of every Sort or Kind. However low our Intereſt may ſeem at preſent, yet *ſome* we have, and perhaps more than can eaſily be imagined; which, by Unanimity and Patience, we hope to improve daily. There was a Time, when we had the Power intirely in our own Hands, if we could but have kept it; *But what has been, may be.* And as low as we ſeem to be, we may again have it in our Power to turn the Tables and the Laugh upon them, who at preſent raiſe it upon us; and if ever we ſhould ſee that happy Day, we ſhall be ſure to take effectual Care to reſtrain the Inſolence, by ſtopping the Mouths and Pens of all Oppoſers. This alone will give us ample Satisfaction for all the Indignities, we have ſuffered, as it will effectually prevent your Lordſhip from ſpeaking and publiſhing, and our Enemies from hearing or reading, what they call *The fineſt Speeches in the* Engliſh *Tongue.*

I hope your Lordſhip will make a proper Uſe of the Hint I have given you, and treat us for the future

future with ſo much Indulgence at leaſt, as may give you a Title to our Favour, if you ſhould live to want it: With this Hope I beg leave to ſubſcribe myſelf,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Moſt Obedient Servant.

A

LETTER

TO A

MEMBER of PARLIAMENT,

CONTAINING A

PROPOSAL

FOR

Bringing in a BILL to Reviſe, Amend, or Repeal certain

OBSOLETE STATUTES,

Commonly called

The Ten Commandments.

LETTER

A

LETTER

TO A

Member of Parliament, &c.

SIR,

THE Friendſhip with which you honour me, and the ardent Zeal you have always exerted in the Cauſe of Liberty, in Oppoſition to Prieſtcraft and Superſtition, have determined me to lay before you my impartial Thoughts upon a Subject, which has more than once been ſtarted in the Courſe of our Converſation. How often have I heard you wiſh that the abſurd Reſtraints that are made uſe of by cunning and deſigning Men, to limit the Freedom of our Actions, as well as our Faith and Judgment in Religious Matters, were intirely removed; that all our *Creeds*, *Articles of Faith*, *moral Precepts*, and *religious Inſtitutions*, were fairly and impartially examined by Men of free and unprejudiced Underſtandings, and we were reſtored to that unbounded Liberty of acting as well as thinking, which Nature, Reaſon, and common Senſe, aſſure us to be the undoubted

doubted Birthright and natural Privilege of all *Free Agents!*

This Liberty of thinking and judging, in Oppoſition to *all* CREEDS *and Creed-makers*, has been ſo ſucceſsfully practiſed and defended of late Years, that I think it is now become almoſt an univerſal Principle; that every Man's natural Reaſon and good Senſe is, and ought to be, the ſole Rule, Meaſure, and Standard of his Faith, becauſe no Man can reaſonably be ſuppoſed to believe what he does not underſtand; ſo that, by neceſſary Conſequence, he that has but little Knowledge can have but little Faith, and he that underſtands nothing at all, can believe nothing at all.—

So far is right, but not ſufficient; this is leaving off in the middle, and doing a good Thing but by halves: If we are only at Liberty to think, and not to act, our Liberty is incomplete, we are ſtill in a Degree of Bondage. That our Will is abſolutely free, is agreed on all Hands, but to what Purpoſe? What are we the better for that Freedom; if, whilſt we are allowed the Liberty of Thought and Will, we are ſtill debarred the Liberty of Action? If the ſober Dictates of Nature, Reaſon, and good Senſe, are ſufficient to regulate our Thoughts, why not our Actions too?

This then is the Point I am endeavouring to clear; and to ſhew that the latter is quite as reaſonable, if not more ſo, than the former. In order to ſet this Matter in the trueſt Light, I ſhall not meddle with thoſe general Principles which have been ſo admirably ſtated and defended by the late Dr. *Tindal*, Dr. *M—d—lle*, and other ingenious Writers, as being

being of ſo abſtracted and delicate a Nature, that they require more Genius and Application to apprehend and purſue them through their natural Conſequences, than can be expected from common Readers. My Buſineſs ſhall be to enter into a more particular Examination of that *ſummary Rule* of our moral and religious Conduct, commonly called *The Ten Commandments*; which, in their moſt extended Senſe, are generally ſuppoſed to be of moral, (nay ſome ſay of natural) Obligation to all Chriſtian People, even in reformed Proteſtant Countries; which is a Point that well deſerves our attentive Conſideration.

That theſe Commandments were originally given to the *Jews*, is beyond all Diſpute; and as their great Lawgiver himſelf declared, and their whole Hiſtory confirms, that they were a *ſtiff-necked, perverſe Generation:* So it is more than probable that theſe Commandments were ſolely intended to correct the Miſunderſtandings, reſtrain the Exceſſes, and regulate the Conduct of that *ſtubborn, wrong-headed People*, who had not Reaſon, nor Learning, nor Politeneſs enough to regulate their own moral Behaviour; but are no more binding to a *ſenſible, learned, juſt, righteous, polite, free-thinking People*, than the Laws concerning Circumciſion and Sacrifices. And as the happy Inhabitants of theſe reformed Nations have long ago got rid of all the ſuperſtitious Impoſitions of Chriſtian Prieſtcraft, it is a Shame and Reproach to them to be ſtill in Bondage to *Jewiſh* Ordinances; eſpecially if it can be made appear, that they are an intolerable Impoſition upon a free People, without having the leaſt moral or natural Aptitude

to

to promote the Welfare of Civil Society, and the temporal Good and Benefit of Mankind, which are now generally acknowledged to be the great End and Foundation of all civil, moral, and religious Inſtitution.

The *firſt* of theſe Commandments (I preſume my Readers can remember it, without having it repeated) is an arbitrary Impoſition upon the *Reaſon* and Liberty of Mankind. Every Man's Belief and Practice neceſſarily follows the Kind and Degree of Evidence he has for either: Now if a Man ſees no more Evidence for one, than he does for five hundred, it is quite indifferent to him whether he have five hundred, or one, or none at all.

The *Second*, depending on the *Firſt*, is but an Abſurdity improved; and if the Firſt be a mere Matter of Indifference, the Second muſt be much more ſo, and by Conſequence, impertinent and unneceſſary.

The *Third*, however vulgarly miſunderſtood, is capable of a rational and uſeful Meaning. It is gerally ſuppoſed to forbid uſing the *Divine Name* without a ſuperſtitious Reverence, ſuch as the *Jews* are known to pay to the *Tetragrammaton*, which plainly ſhews that this Prohibition was intended principally, if not intirely, for them; which, to us Chriſtians, appears highly abſurd and unreaſonable. For it is a certain and infallible Rule, laid down by a certain celebrated Author, *That no other Meaning or Interpretation is to be put upon the Words of Scripture, but what is agreeable to the common Rules of ſpeaking upon the like Occaſions.* Now let any Man, that underſtands the Propriety of the *Engliſh* Language, judge what is the plain and obvious Senſe of ſaying or doing any thing

in

in vain; it can only mean the doing a Thing to no Purpoſe or to no Advantage. Thus, we ſay, when a Man talks a whole Hour by the Clock, and makes nothing of it, and gets nothing by it, that he ſtretches his Lungs and ſpends his Breath *in vain*. If a Man were to take a long Voyage, and return without any Gain or Advantage to himſelf, he may be juſtly ſaid to have traveled ſo far, and laboured ſo much *in vain*. This is too plain to need any further Proof or Explanation, and gives us a rational and uſeful Senſe of this Commandment, *i. e.* that we ſhould never make uſe of that *Holy Name*, but to anſwer ſome Purpoſe, to ſerve ſome End, or procure ſome Advantage, ſuch as the qualifying ourſelves for a good Employment, ſupplanting a Rival, amuſing a ſuſpicious Friend, or ruining a profeſſed Enemy, by ſolemn Declarations, which we neither believe nor intend to perform, or any ſuch-like Caſe, which may poſſibly happen in the Courſe and Buſineſs of Life.

The *Fourth* is miſerably perverted from its original Deſign, being generally ſuppoſed to be of univerſal Obligation to all *Jews* and Chriſtians to keep holy one Day in ſeven. Whereas it appears at firſt Sight to be only a political, good-natured Contrivance in Favour of the laborious Part of Mankind, People of Quality and Faſhion have no Concern in it: It was only intended for the *Canaille*, for the Scrubs and Drudges of Mankind, as appears from the very Letter of the Commandment: *Six Days ſhalt thou labour, and do all that thou haſt to do; but the ſeventh Day*, &c. You ſee plainly the Command is directed only to thoſe that labour ſix Days in the Week; for them only is the ſeventh Day appointed to be kept holy, or

a Day of Reſt from their Labours, which is determined beyond all Contradiction by theſe Words, *and do all that thou haſt to do*, which plainly reſtrain it to thoſe only that have *ſomething to do*; they therefore that have *nothing at all to do*, are no ways concerned in the Commandment. The Caſe is plainly this: They who are obliged *to labour ſix Days* in the Week, and on each of theſe Days have *ſomething to do*, are indulged by this Commandment in having the ſeventh Day allowed them for a Day of Reſt. They therefore whoſe eaſy Circumſtances exempt them from the Neceſſity of any kind of Labour, ſo much as one Day in the Year, who have nothing at all to do but to eat, drink, and ſleep, and divert themſelves, cannot fairly and conſiſtently be ſuppoſed to have any Concern, or be under any Obligation about it. This appears yet plainer from the common and vulgar Prejudices about the Manner of keeping holy this Sabbath-day or Day of Reſt; which is to *go to Church to ſay their Prayers, to read the Bible and other religious Books.* But this would be ſo far from making it a Day of Reſt and Refreſhment to many People of Rank and Quality, that it would rather be the ſevereſt Penance you could impoſe upon them. How barbarous and unreaſonable would it be to expect to ſee People of Faſhion and Diſtinction take as much pains in dreſſing to appear at Church among a Set of miſerable Sinners, as in the beſt Company at the Drawing-Room or the Opera; and all this only to be told of their Faults, and put in mind of their Duty? What an Impoſition would it be upon People of Figure and Pleaſure to be ſet to con over a Set of old-faſhioned Prayers which they had learnt in the Nurſery, and never thought of ſince, or to ſit

ſpelling

ſpelling over the Bible or a Book of Devotion for an Hour together, which they could better employ at Hazard, Backgammon, or Quadrille, or in a Party of Gallantry and Pleaſure. But to put this Matter beyond all doubt: It is plain that this Commandment was intended only for the labouring Part of Mankind, becauſe you find that the Cattle are included in the Indulgence, as well as their Owners or Drivers; for if the Beaſts of the Earth did not reſt, how ſhould the Beaſts of the People? As the People were commanded to reſt, it was neceſſary the Cattle ſhould do ſo too. If the Horſes muſt be put to for a *Sunday*'s Journey, *John* muſt get up and drive, unleſs *his Honour* or *his Worſhip* will be ſo humble and ſo good-natured as to drive himſelf one Day in the Week, and let the Servants go to Church. But after all, there is nothing more enjoined or implied in this Commandment, than what common Senſe and Neceſſity could teach us: For neither Cattle nor Servants can work always, they muſt of neceſſity have ſome reſt; and therefore there ſeems to have been but little Occaſion for a Commandment from Heaven in an Affair where common Senſe is a ſufficient Guide. Upon the whole, theſe four firſt Commandments ſeem to be of very little Conſequence to Mankind; for the Conduct of Men of Senſe and Taſte ever was, and ever will be, the ſame, as if theſe Commandments had been never given.

The *Fifth Commandment* ſeems as unneceſſary as the other four, and was plainly calculated for the *Jews*, to ſerve ſome political Purpoſes, as appears plainly from the Promiſe of Length of Days, or long Enjoy-

ment of their new Poſſeſſions. Whereas, among us it is generally a Rule, that Children of courſe will honour their Parents, if they think they deſerve it; that is, if they provide for them according to their State and Condition, if they indulge and gratify all their juſt and reaſonable Deſires and Inclinations, if they lay no Reſtraints upon them, nor teaze their tender Ears with diſagreeable Lectures about Religion, Temperance, Soberneſs, and Chaſtity, ſuch Parents will be ſure to be honoured by ſuch Children; but thoſe that act otherwiſe are not like to receive much Honour from their Children in this polite, well-bred Generation though there were ten thouſand Commandments to enjoin it.

The *Five laſt Commandments* lie under a general Prejudice, upon a Suſpicion of Corruption and Interpolation. It has been ſuſpected by ſome very ſagacious Critics, that the negative Particle (*not*) has by Negligence or Deſign been inſerted into each of them, though no direct Proof has been yet made of the Fraud. The firſt Hint that was publicly given of this Kind was in an accidental Converſation betwixt the Devil and the late Dr. *Tindal*, as the Story is merrily told by the Author of the *Apparition*. And a deviliſh unlucky Diſcovery it would prove, if the Thing could be fairly made out, and the Interpolation directly proved. Though, to ſay the Truth, the Suſpicion ſeems to have been much antienter than the aforeſaid Converſation; for we are told, that in the Reign of King *Charles* the Firſt, ſome bold Printer had the Courage to leave out the ſuſpicious Particle only in one of the Commandments, to feel the Pulſe of the People, and ſee whe-

ther they were ripe for further Diſcoveries, and a thorough Reformation; and that accordingly in a new Edition of the Liturgy, the ſeventh Commandment was printed thus, *Thou ſhalt commit Adultery*. But as the poor Devil happened to live in evil Days of Biggotry and Superſtition, under a grave formal Prince, and an old, ſour, moroſe Archbiſhop, who had no more Taſte of Gallantry than Criticiſm, he was ſeverely ſwinged, and the whole Impreſſion called in, to the great Diſcouragement of all Attempts of that kind for the future. Though in the merry Reign and Court of his *moſt religious and gracious Son*, the clever polite People of both Sexes ſeemed ſo well ſatisfied with the new Reading, that they thought it an excellent Emendation, and directed their Conduct accordingly. And I cannot but hope that conſidering the great Encouragement that is now publicly given for free Debate and Inquiry into theſe and ſuch-like ſuperſtitious Frauds, we ſhall ſoon ſee this dark Affair ſet in a true Light, and perhaps it may be thought worth while to give public Encouragement to the Learned to bend their Thoughts this Way, by propoſing a competent Reward to any that ſhall be able to make and publiſh a full Diſcovery of this Corruption and Interpolation, as it would contribute to the Quieting of many Conſciences, and promoting and eſtabliſhing an unbounded Liberty in Thought, Word, and Deed. However, till ſuch Diſcovery can be made, let us ſuppoſe the preſent Reading to be genuine, and then conſider them in their natural Meaning, without thoſe unreaſonable Interpretations which Prejudice and Cuſtom ſeem to have fixed upon them.

The *Sixth Commandment* could never be intended as an abſolute Prohibition not to take away the Life of another; it only forbids that clumſy butcherly way of Murdering, made uſe of by the vileſt and meaneſt Part of Mankind: Whereas People of Rank and Diſtinction, who kill in an honourable gentleman-like way, are no ways concerned in this Commandment, or affected by it. This is ſo agreeable to the natural Senſe of Mankind, that the very ſame Action ſhall be criminal in one Man, and not in another. If one Scoundrel happen to kill another, it is truly and properly called Murder; but if a Man of Rank and Figure happen to kill a Domeſtic or Inferior, with or without Provocation, or even an Equal, in an honourable way, it alters both the Name and Nature of the Crime, and becomes no more than Manſlaughter: And the Gentlemen of the Sword, who happen to kill their Man in a genteel Way, are no more guilty of Murder, than an honeſt peaceable Citizen, that kills a Fly or a Spider, or ſwallows an Oyſter alive.

The *Seventh Commandment* is moſt certainly to be underſtood with the ſame Reſtrictions and Limitations as the Sixth, and could only be meant to reſtrain little People within ſuch Bounds as are abſolutely neceſſary for their Rank and Station in Life. For if Tradeſmen, Artificers, and Labourers ſhould take it in their Heads to turn fine Gentlemen, and pretend to mimic their Betters, ſhould they neglect the Care of their Shops and Employments in queſt of Gallantries, it muſt end in an abſolute Decay of Trade, Neglect of Buſineſs, and the Ruin of many poor Families, and bring an unſupportable Burden

upon the Public. Beſides, as Affairs of this kind are not to be tranſacted without very great Expence, Addreſs, and Application, it cannot be ſuppoſed that People of mean Birth, low Education, and ſmall Fortunes, can ever manage them in ſo polite and genteel a way as to avoid Diſcovery and Scandal, or carry it off with that intrepid Aſſurance as is abſolutely neceſſary for People in ſuch delicate Circumſtances. But then this cannot be ſuppoſed to affect People of ſuperior Fortune and Quality, who have ſo much Time and Money upon their Hands, that they ſcarce know how to employ it otherwiſe. Now if a Man of Quality ſhould condeſcend ſo low as to beſtow the Exuberancy of his Blood and Fortune in relieving the Neceſſities of ſome pretty Neighbour; ſhould he beſtow a Daſh of this noble Blood upon a deſerving plebean Family, and pay well into the Bargain, it ought to be conſidered as an Honour, as well as an Advantage, to the above-ſaid Family, and as a way of mending the Blood and Fortune, if not the Morals, of the next Generation. And as People of Rank and Condition are exempt from the Obligation of this Precept, ſo, by an Argument *à fortiori*, are Legiſlators and Governors of every ſort and kind, who are preſumed of courſe to be the beſt Judges of the Duty and Neceſſity of their Subjects, and are accountable to nobody but themſelves.

The *Eighth Commandment* is certainly to be underſtood with the ſame Reſtrictions and Limitations which is directly employed in the very Letter of the Precept, *Thou ſhalt not ſteal. Stealing* we all know is the moſt pitiful ſcoundrel Act of Injuſtice; it implies a mean, ſneaking, cowardly way of defrauding one's

Neighbour. Every Seſſions-paper ſhews you with what Contempt and Deteſtation thoſe poor Dogs are treated for ſtealing three Silver Spoons, the Property of *G. W.* Inholder, Value one Pound ten Shillings; a Pair of Breeches, and two Shirts, the Property of *L. C.* Labourer, Value ſix Shillings; four Sheep, the Property of *M. C.* Eſq; Value three Pounds ſixteen Shillings; not to mention the Heroes of this Claſs, the Horſe-ſtealers, who are tucked up every Aſſizes without Mercy or Pity. But this can by no means be thought to extend to the numberleſs Arts and Branches of Induſtry and Policy, by which People of Rank and Diſtinction increaſe their Fortunes, and ſupport their State and Figure in the World; this would be an effectual way of cutting all the Nerves of Induſtry at one Stroke, a fatal Check to all the Myſteries of Trade and Commerce, and an abſolute Diſcouragement to all ſorts of Jobbers, Gameſters, Fortune-hunters, and Jockeys, who are the Directors and Managers of all our Parties of Buſineſs and Diverſion; and would be an inſufferable Reflection upon the Memory of ſome of the greateſt Men in all Ages, whoſe Names are tranſmitted to Poſterity under the glorious Titles of illuſtrious Conquerors, able Miniſters, cunning Stateſmen, and conſummate Politicians.

The *Ninth Commandment* I think as little liable to Exception as any of them; but yet I cannot think it amiſs if it were a little qualified by two or three Exceptions in favour of public Miniſters, Courts of Juſtice, and Tea-tables. There are many weighty and political Reaſons for indulging public Miniſters in certain Deviations from Truth, which however criminal

minal they may appear in private Perſons, are, in thoſe public Stations, expedient and neceſſary. Sir *Harry Wotton*, who was himſelf a foreign Ambaſſador, has long ago declared, that *lying* dextrouſly and cunningly, and with a good Intention, is the chief Buſineſs of ſuch Miniſters: And therefore has given us the Definition of an Ambaſſador in theſe Terms, *Legatus eſt vir bonus, peregrè miſſus ad mentiendum reipublicæ cauſâ*, i. e. *An Ambaſſador is an honeſt Man, ſent to lye abroad for the Good of his Country.* And whatever Reaſons can be offered in Vindication of Ambaſſadors for *lying* abroad, may, with equal Juſtice, be pleaded for thoſe Miniſters who are *lying* at home for the ſame good and laudable Purpoſes.

So alſo the tedious Delays of Juſtice, eſpecially in Chancery Suits, are ſo notorious to the whole Nation, that it has often been found, that, by the long Continuance of the Suit, he that gets a Decree in his Favour, is often undone before he can obtain it. Now where would be the Hurt, if ſome good-natured Perſon, in mere Compaſſion to both the Suitors, ſhould, by an officious Falſhood, determine the Iſſue of the Cauſe, and ſhorten the Suit, to the manifeſt Advantage of them both? Never tell me that the Action is in itſelf unjuſt and ſinful. I deny it. The Action is not *malum in ſe*; any more than giving a *Coup de grace* to a dying Criminal, which puts him out of his Pain. And though the giving ſuch a mortal Stroke to an innocent uncondemned Perſon would be highly cruel, barbarous, and wicked; yet it is an Act of Mercy and Charity to the expiring Malefactor.

And as to our Tea-tables, it is well known that *Scandal*, which is one Species of falſe Witneſs, is the

Life of thoſe little polite Aſſemblies; and if they were confined to utter nothing but ſtrict Truth, there would be an End of all Converſation, and the prettieſt Orators in the Circle would grow as dull as a Watch-Light, and as inſipid as an old Almanack; and, after all, where is the Hurt of making an ingenious Story, or an embroidering and embelliſhing a real Fact, where the Deſign is only to divert and inſtruct the Company? *Inventers of Fables* have always been ranked among the wiſe Men and Philoſophers of antient Times, nor has it ever been objected to any of the wiſe Antients or Moderns, that they have made Beaſts and Birds, Trees and Flowers, talk like Men of Senſe, for the Correction and Inſtruction of their Betters.

The *Tenth Commandment*, after all that has been ſaid about the reſt, ſeems perfectly needleſs and ſuperfluous, and commands direct Impoſſibilities. For ſhew me the Man that is tied for Life to an ill-natured, ſour, proud, diſagreeable Rib, who would not wiſh to make an Exchange for the chearful, good-natured, agreeable Spouſe of his Neighbour? Who would not wiſh to change his own old, inconvenient, ruinous Houſe, for a new and convenient one of his Neighbour's? So that a Prohibition of this kind is a direct Contradiction to the very Law and Light of Nature, which muſt, in all Caſes, be conſulted and obeyed, as the infallible Rule of our moral and religious Conduct.

The Premiſes tenderly conſidered, we cannot but hope that care will be taken ſo to explain, amend, or repeal theſe obſolete Statutes, that they may no longer give Offence to People of Rank, Diſtinction, and

and Figure, in Purſuit of their Intereſt or Pleaſures. But if it ſhall be thought fit, by the Wiſdom of our Superiors, to continue them ſtill in Force, it may be with ſuch Reſtrictions and Limitations, as not to extend to any but the low uneducated Part of Mankind, who have neither Senſe, nor Reaſon, nor Politeneſs enough to govern and conduct themſelves. And, if I may be allowed the further Liberty of giving my Opinion and Advice in the preſent Caſe, I beg leave to propoſe certain Heads of a Bill to be offered to the Houſe upon a proper Occaſion, as follows:

THAT whereas a certain immemorial ſuperſtitious Practice has prevailed in theſe Nations, for certain old Women of both Sexes, ſuch as Grandmothers, Nurſes, Maiden Aunts, School-dames, and Parſons, to teach and inſtruct the Children even of Proteſtant Parents in certain antient *Jewiſh* Laws, commonly called *The Ten Commandments*; which ſaid ſuperſtitious Practice, notwithſtanding the many Attempts which, from time to time, have been made by certain judicious and well-meaning Perſons towards a thorough Reformation, ſtill ſubſiſts among us, in Defiance of all the natural and religious Rights and Privileges of a free Proteſtant People; it has been long thought, by all true Lovers of Liberty, to be almoſt an inſupportable Burden, who therefore wiſh and hope to be relieved from it by a proper Authority. But whereas the ſaid *Jewiſh* Laws and Precepts have been, by the Ignorance and Superſtition of our Forefathers, unhappily incorporated in the Laws of our Country, and made a Part of our legal Conſtitution,

and

and cannot, without the Appearance of Difficulty and Danger, be intirely repealed; it is therefore thought proper ſo to limit and explain their Meaning and Obligation, as in a great meaſure to prevent the ſeveral Hardſhips and Inconveniences ariſing from the miſtaken Notions and Prejudices about them. And whereas it is now univerſally agreed and confeſſed, that the Good of Society, and the civil Intereſts of Mankind, are the ſole Foundation, Rule, and Meaſure of all religious Inſtitutions, and that nothing ought to be deemed to be of religious Obligation, but ſo far as it contributes to that important End. And whereas it appears from the concurrent Teſtimony of all Ages, that there have been great Princes, mighty Conquerors, able Miniſters, cunning Politicians, gallant Commanders, eminent Lawyers, wiſe Magiſtrates, ſkilful Phyſicians, and eloquent Preachers, who had either never received, or utterly renounced, theſe popular Superſtitions, and acted with an apparent Contempt of all Obligations vulgarly ſuppoſed to ariſe from them; we are thence induced to believe, that the following Explanation and Limitations of the ſaid Precepts will be of ſingular Uſe and Benefit to the Subjects of this Realm, the Eaſe of tender Conſciences, and the natural and religious Liberties of all his Majeſty's loving Subjects.

The *Firſt Commandment* is a manifeſt Impoſition upon the natural Rights and Liberties of Mankind. It is confeſſed on all hands, that every true free-born Proteſtant has a Right to judge freely of all Articles of Religion that ſhall be propoſed for his Belief or Practice, and to determine according to the Kind or Degree of Evidence that ſhall be offered him; but if a Man

a Man ſhall ſee no more Evidence for one than for five hundred, or none at all, it will be an extreme Hardſhip to require of him any Belief or Practice, which he, upon the beſt Evidence, ſhall judge unreaſonable.

The *Second* is quite an unneceſſary Commandment; for if a Man ſees no Evidence of a Subſtance, he will be little concerned about the Shadow: And for a Man of Senſe to be ſolicitous about the Picture, Image, or Statue of a Perſon *in nubibus*, which he has no Reaſon to believe ever did or could exiſt *in rerum naturâ*, is a Suppoſition too groſs to be admitted.—

Be it therefore enacted, *&c.* That, from and after the Day of next enſuing, no Perſon or Perſons ſhall preſume to declare, affirm, or teach, by Word, or Writing, that theſe two Commandments are, in their own Nature, of univerſal Obligation to all Sorts of People; but ſhall freely own, teach, and declare, that they are Points of mere Speculation, of an indifferent Nature, of which every true Proteſtant has Liberty to judge, pronounce, and practiſe according to the beſt Light and Evidence that he or ſhe ſhall have, and no otherwiſe.

The *Third Commandment*, however intended for the Good and Benefit of Society, in which the Good and Benefit of every particular Member of the ſaid Society is neceſſarily included, has been perverted to certain ſuperſtitious Uſes and Purpoſes, as if there were an inherent Holineſs in the Sound of that *Name*, and the very Letters that compoſe it; ſo as that it ought never to be mentioned but on certain ſolemn and ſignificant Occaſions, ſuch as Prayers, Benedictions, *&c.* and with certain Marks and Tokens of Reverence

Reverence and Devotion, which are no ways expreſſed or implied in the Letter of the ſaid Commandment, as interpreted by the beſt Critics and Commentators. One of theſe, a celebrated Writer, a great Critic, and an excellent Caſuiſt, has laid down an infallible Rule of Interpretation in his matchleſs Book called, *A plain Account of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper* *, *That no other Meaning or Interpretation is to be put upon the Words of Scripture, but ſuch as is agreeable to the common Rules of Speaking upon the like Occaſions.* Now the Expreſſion of ſaying or doing a thing *in vain*, is ſo plain and obvious, that no Man, even of common Senſe, can miſtake it. It always does, and can, ſignify no more nor no leſs, than the doing or ſaying a thing to no Purpoſe, to no Advantage, to ſerve no Intereſt, or procure no Good to the Perſon that does or ſays it, or to his Family, Friends, and Dependents; and can never include thoſe who never uſe that *Name*, but with ſome direct Proſpect of Intereſt and Advantage to themſelves, which (according to the fundamental Rule before laid down) is neceſſarily included in the Intereſt of the Public, and conſequently inſeparable from it. So then he cannot be ſaid to take that *Name* in vain, who makes uſe of it by way of Oath, Promiſe, Affirmation, Negation, Declaration, or Aſſertion of any ſort or kind, as a Qualification or Means of obtaining any honourable or gainful Poſt, Office, or Employment, Eccleſiaſtical, Military, or Civil; or who makes uſe of it to ſupplant a Rival, amuſe a ſuſpicious Friend, or ruin a profeſſed Enemy.—

Be it therefore enacted, that if there be any Perſon or Perſons ſo weak and ſuperſtitious, as to underſtand and

* Preface vi.

and practiſe this Commandment according to the vulgar Prejudices, it ſhall be lawful for him or her to think and act accordingly, without any Let, Hindrance, or Moleſtation from any Perſon or Perſons whatſoever; but that the true and genuine Senſe and Meaning of the ſaid Commandment be declared to be as is above fully recited and explained.

The *Fourth Commandment*, however particularly calculated and intended for the Eaſe and Benefit of the lower Part of Mankind, has been notoriouſly perverted and abuſed, to the great Detriment and Annoyance of ſeveral excellent and well-diſpoſed Perſons, who have, by certain weak and ſuperſtitious Prejudices, been diverted from attending to the neceſſary Calls of Buſineſs and Pleaſure, and ſuffered themſelves to be crouded up for ſeveral Hours together in the Heat of Summer in a greazy Congregation of miſerable Sinners, which they could have ſpent more agreeably with a Set of ſelect Friends in a ſhady Garden, or a cool Arbour; and to ſit ſtarving and freezing in the midſt of Winter, when a good Fire, or a warm Bed, would have done them quite as much Good, and been much more agreeable. Whereas the Letter of the Commandment ſhews it plainly to be intended only for the Eaſe and Benefit of the laborious Part of Mankind, who are obliged to labour ſix Days in the Week, and do all that they have to do; which plainly ſhews, that they who never labour, and have nothing at all to do, are no way concerned in this Commandment.—

Be it therefore enacted, That from and after the Day of no Perſon or Perſons ſhall preſume to teach or declare, either by Word or Writing,

Writing, that this fourth Commandment is equally and indifferently binding and obliging to all ſorts of Perſons, of what Rank or Quality ſoever, but to ſuch, and ſuch only, as are herein after ſpecified, declared, and expreſſed; that is to ſay, all Day-labourers, Farmers and their Servants, Artificers and Tradeſmen, who being neceſſarily obliged to attend the Buſineſs of their ſeveral Profeſſions ſix Days in the Week, ought to reſt from their ſeveral Labours on the ſeventh Day; but that the Obligation does not extend to People of the higheſt Rank and Condition, nor to any Gentleman who can ſupport the Dignity of his Perſon and Family without any Labour or Buſineſs whatſoever, ſo as to make it neceſſary for him to come to Church, or ſpend the Day in Prayer and Devotion with his Family at home; except where the great Men of the Pariſh happens to be the Impropriator of the Rectory, and enjoys the Whole, or any Part of the great Tythes; for it is hereby expreſsly provided, that every ſuch Impropriator ſhall be bound to attend the Service of the Church, with as many of his Family as can be ſpared, every firſt *Sunday* in the Month, as an Acknowledgment that they hold and enjoy the ſaid Tythes, by a ſort of religious Tenure, as a kind of Eccleſiaſtical Fee; and that upon Default by Non-attendance, the ſaid great Tythes ſhall immediately revert to the Church, and be annexed to the Vicarage for ever. And whereas it may poſſibly happen, that certain Eccleſiaſtical Perſons may imagine themſelves intitled to the Benefit of this Act, as Perſons that are obliged to no ſort of Labour, that have no manner or kind of thing to do for the above-ſaid ſix Days of the Week; it is hereby expreſsly provided and declared, That

That they ſhall attend at leaſt, if not perform, the Service of the Church, every *Sunday* Morning; unleſs prevented by any neceſſary and allowable Impediment, of which themſelves ſhall be the ſole Judges. And whereas a further Doubt may hereafter ariſe, how far the Domeſtics of noble Families, and others excepted out of this Act, may be affected by it, it is hereby expreſsly declared and provided, That the Chaplain (if there be any) and all the other Servants out of Livery, with my Lady's Woman, and her Gentlewomen Fellow-Servants, are to be conſidered in a diſtinct Capacity, being a ſort of *Mixtæ Perſonæ*, as People not quite idle, nor quite employed, as People that may be ſaid to have ſome ſort of Labour, though not to take much Pains; who may be ſaid to have ſomething to do, though not a great deal, nor to any great Purpoſe. The Chaplain, therefore, if it appears that he performs no Eccleſiaſtical Office, ſuch as reading Prayers, or ſaying Grace in the Family, ſhall be obliged to attend the Service of the Pariſh-Church every *Sunday* Morning, with as many of the better Sort of Servants as can be ſpared from the Service of the Family; but that the Maſters and Heads of theſe Families, and all other Perſons above-mentioned and qualified as this Act directs, are, and ſhall be, at full Liberty to ſpend that Day in Traveling, Parties of Pleaſure, Smoking, Drinking, Gaming, Walking, or Sleeping, as he or ſhe ſhall think fit, without being accountable to any Perſon or Perſons whatſoever for ſo doing; which we cannot help thinking to be a juſt and reaſonable Indulgence to People of Rank and Figure, that they may be diſtinguiſhed from their Inferiors, who are deſigned for nothing higher than the Service of God, and their Superiors.

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The *Fifth Commandment* ſeems to be a Precept of a very indifferent Nature; for as it is certain that no Children of tolerable Senſe or good Manners, would refuſe to pay due Honour and Reſpect to ſuch Parents as ſhall appear to deſerve it; ſo it is as certain that they neither will nor can to thoſe that do not. Which neceſſarily implies a Duty in all Parents ſo to behave towards their Children, as to deſerve that Honour from them, which this Commandment obliges them to pay; and what are the Terms of this mutual Obligation, Nature itſelf ſeems to determine. The State and Condition of young People requires that they ſhould dreſs, converſe, and behave in ſuch a manner, as to ſhine in all public Aſſemblies, and diſtinguiſh themſelves by an apparent Superiority of Figure, Dreſs, and Equipage, agreeable to the Superiority of their Birth, Fortune, or Expectation: On the other hand, the State and Condition of Parents, *i. e.* of *Old Men and old Women*, require nothing but the mere wholſome and cleanly Neceſſaries of Life; that they, who are, or ought to be, of courſe excluded from the gay Meetings and polite Aſſemblies of the Fair, the Witty, and the Young, where they only ſerve to ſpoil Sport, to damp the Mirth, and lay a Reſtraint upon the Frolics of the good Company, have really no Occaſion for any thing, but warm Cloathing and comfortable nouriſhing Food, Soups, Broths, and Jellies, good Fires, warm Beds, and a few Religious Books; Nature itſelf dictates that they ſhould betimes reſign to the Heirs of their Bodies thoſe Superfluities of Fortune, which they neither want, nor know how to enjoy with Reliſh or Decency.—

Be it therefore enacted—, That if any Father or Mother are bleſſed with any Iſſue Male or Female, who are arrived at the proper Age of Deſire and Diſcretion, warm Inclinations and good Underſtandings, who are too big to be corrected, and too wiſe to be taught, that is to ſay, Sons that have attained to the full Age of ſeventeen or eighteen at the moſt, and Daughters to the Age of Thirteen or Fourteen at the moſt; That the ſaid Fathers and Mothers of ſuch Children ſhall forthwith reſign to the ſaid Heirs of their Bodies, all that Superfluity of Fortune, which their ſaid Heirs ſhall judge reaſonable and convenient for themſelves, and unneceſſary and burdenſome to their ſaid Parents. Which reaſonable Condition, if their ſaid Parents ſhall refuſe to comply with, they ſhall be taught by their ſaid Children, who are reaſonably preſumed to be better Judges than themſelves, the Abſurdity and Injuſtice of ſuch their Conduct and Behaviour toward their own Offſpring, by that negligent and contemptuous Treatment as ſuch Parents may be reaſonably preſumed to deſerve from any ſenſible, polite, well-bred Children. But if any Parents ſhall be found ſo diſcreet and indulgent as freely and chearfully to reſign all ſuch unneceſſary Superfluity of Eſtates, Jointures, Settlements, Penſions, or Payments whatſoever, for the Behoof and Benefit of their ſaid hopeful Progeny, that they ſhall from thenceforth be intitled to all that Honour, Reſpect, and Eſteem, which they may be juſtly and reaſonably preſumed to deſerve, according to the full Intent and Meaning of this *Commandment*.

The *Sixth Commandment*, though capable of a very ſober and rational Meaning, has been, like the reſt,

miſerably perverted by a Set of cowardly low-ſpirited ſuperſtitious Expoſitors, who make it criminal even in Men of Spirit and Quality to do Juſtice to themſelves and their Characters, by puniſhing the ill Manners of any little dirty Poltron that ſhall preſume to affront them, by running him through the Body, beating out his Brains, or any other ſuch Ways and Means as have in all Ages been thought reaſonable and reputable, to ſecure the Regard due to their Rank and Fortune, and chaſtiſe the Inſolence of their Inferiors. Whereas it is generally preſumed, that this *Commandment* was only intended to teach the lower and uneducated Part of Mankind to be quiet and peaceable in their Behaviour, not to be quarrelſome in their Cups, not to offer any outragious Acts of Violence to the Diſturbance of their Betters in any polite Aſſembly, where the Little Vulgar are too apt to mingle with the Great; as at Horſe-Races, Bull-baitings, Country Fairs, Wakes, Feaſts, and Revels, by killing or murdering one another, in a rude, clumſy, paſſionate, butcherly Way.——

Be it therefore enacted, That if any Perſon, below the Degree of a Gent. bearing Coat-Armour for three Deſcents, of which undoubted Proof ſhall be produced out of the Heralds Office, under the Seal and Sign-Manual of ..... King at Arms, ſhall preſume to kill or demoliſh any of his Fellow-Subjects, upon any Sort or Kind of Provocation whatſoever, it ſhall be deemed a Violation of this *Commandment*, and he ſhall be eſteemed guilty of *Murder*. But if any Nobleman or Gentleman, qualified as above directed, ſhall exerciſe the ſame Act of Violence upon any Equal or Inferior, upon any juſt

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and reaſonable Provocation, of which he himſelf ſhall be the proper Judge, it ſhall be conſidered only as *Manſlaughter*; and that it be an Inſtruction to all Coroners, to give it in Charge to their ſeveral Inqueſts to bring in their Verdicts accordingly— With a ſaving Clauſe, in Favour of all Officers of the Army, who, being by their Profeſſion, Gentlemen of Blood, ſhall not be obliged to produce ſuch Certificates from the Heralds Office, as are above mentioned and required; but that a Regimental Coat, and a laced Hat and Cockade, ſhall be to all Intents and Purpoſes, equivalent to ſuch Certificates and Teſtimonials required to be produced by others. Always provided, that this Clauſe, in Favour of the military Gentlemen ſhall, by no means, be extended to the Officers of the Militia, who being a Kind of *Mixtæ Perſonæ*, half civil and half military, are not obliged to look fierce, or appear terrible, to their peaceable Neighbours, but upon the Field of Muſter, or on a Day of Engagement in *Tothill-fields*, or any adjacent Plain or Field of Battle, or upon being interrupted in their March through the narrow Streets and Lanes of this City, by ſaucy Draymen, Hackney-Coachmen, or ſuch like Impediments: If, on the Overflowings of their martial Fury, on ſuch Provocations, they ſhall take it in their Heads to kill either Man or Beaſt, they ſhall, ſo ſoon as they are diveſted of their regimental Terrors and Accoutrements, and ſettled in their civil State of Trade and Tranquillity, be liable to the ſame Sentence of Guilt and Puniſhment, as any other of their civil and peaceable Fellow-Subjects.

The *Seventh Commandment*, like the reſt, could be only intended to ſecure and promote the Good of the Public, by preſerving the Order of Society, and diſcouraging Luxury and Idleneſs among the lower Part of the People, who alone need or require ſuch Reſtraints to be laid upon them, as not having Senſe, Taſte, or Politeneſs enough, to direct and govern themſelves. Should ſuch People as theſe, give themſelves up to Intrigues and Gallantries, the neceſſary Expence, Application, and Addreſs, that ſuch Affairs require, would have as fatal an Influence upon the Welfare of the Nation, as ſuffering unqualified Perſons to poach and deſtroy the Game. And, indeed, to ſay the Truth, it is the Opinion of my worthy Friend, Mr. *Serjeant Fribble*, that this Caſe comes directly within the *Game-Act*. He aſſerts, that all theſe *What d' ye call 'ems*, are certainly *feræ naturæ*, however tame and tractable they may, on proper Occaſions, appear to their Keepers. And ſhould the induſtrious and laborious Part of the People be permitted to interfere with their Betters in theſe Diververſions, it would tend to impoveriſh the induſtrious and laborious Part of their People, by diverting them from their proper Employments, would be greatly detrimental to our Trade and Manufacture, ruin many Families, and increaſe the Number of our Poor, ſo as to be an inſupportable Burden to the Landed Intereſt of this Nation. But this ought, by no Means, to be extended to People of Figure and Fortune, whoſe Exuberancy of Blood and Riches may require ſuch Expedients to reduce them to a ſober Degree of Mediocrity and Coolneſs; much leſs can it be ſuppoſed to affect our Governors and Superiors

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in Church or State, who, by the Nature of their ſeveral Offices, are preſumed to be the proper Judges of their own or their People's Neceſſities, and are obliged to provide for both.

Be it therefore enacted, *&c.* That if, from and after the Day of next enſuing, any Labourer, Servant, Artificer, or Tradeſman, or any Perſon under the Degree of a Gentleman, qualified as above directed, ſhall wantonly and unadviſedly ſo far neglect the proper Buſineſs of his Profeſſion, and the Care of his Family, as to enter into any Intrigues or Familiarities with any other Woman, than Law and Cuſtom ſhall allow; that is to ſay, any married Man with any Woman, except his own lawful Wife; or any unmarried Man, with the lawful Wife of any other Man; he ſhall be deemed guilty of the Breach of this *Commandment*. But it is hereby declared, that this *Commandment* does, by no means, extend to People of Fortune, Rank, and Quality, who may condeſcend ſo low as to beſtow the Redundancy of their Blood and Fortune to the ennobling the Breed, relieving the Neceſſities, and raiſing the Fortune, of a clever, deſerving, plebean Family, or the giving and receiving mutual Marks of warm Benevolence and Affection to their Equals or Superiors; eſpecially if, by ſuch Engraftment or Inoculation, the Breed ſhould happen to be mended, and a booby Family, that have been Blockheads ever ſince the Conqueſt, ſhould viſibly and apparently improve into a Race of Wits, Smarts, and clever Fellows; but more eſpecially, if Matters can be ſo managed, that the Huſband can, upon a valuable Conſideration, be brought to conſent to this Method

of improving the Genius and Fortune of his Family, it being a Maxim of Law and common Senſe, that *Volenti non fit injuria.*

The *Eighth Commandment* appears plainly, by the very Letter of it, to be intended purely to diſcourage thoſe mean, pitiful, ſniveling Rogues, that, in a ſecret cowardly Way, cheat and defraud their Neighbours; ſuch as Robbers of Hen-rooſts and Orchards, Sheep-ſtealers, Horſe-ſtealers, Shop-lifters, and Pick-pockets; but can, by no means, be ſuppoſed to affect the open, generous, undiſguiſed Methods, by which Men of Genius and Penetration increaſe their Fortunes, and ſupport their Rank and Figure in the World; it could never be intended for Men of Parts and Induſtry, who are the great Supports of Civil Society; it could never be ſuppoſed to condemn the improving thoſe Advantages, which Men of ſuperior Abilities in the ſeveral States and Profeſſions of Life, have always thought themſelves intitled to, from the lazy, indolent, undiſcerning, booby Part of Mankind, who want Talents to preſerve or enjoy thoſe Superfluities of Fortune, which Men of ſuperior Genius want and deſerve. Much leſs can it be ſuppoſed to affect thoſe who have the good Fortune to be the Directors and Governors of great Families, Provinces, or Kingdoms, who have an undoubted Right to all ſuch Emoluments, Profits, and Advantages which they ſhall think fit and reaſonable, to reward the Labour, Attention, and Time, which they are forced to employ in the Diſcharge of their ſeveral Offices and Employments, for the Good of the Public.

Be it therefore enacted, *&c.* That if from and after the Day of next enſuing, any little pitiful Rogue ſhall be found filching, ſtealing, or felonioufly purloining any Sum or Sums of Money, any Piece or Parcel of Goods, either dead or alive, whether Apples, Pears, Eggs, Poultry, Meat, Drink, or Wearing Apparel, Linen or Woollen Cloth, Sheep, Horſes, or Oxen, Fans, Gloves, Ribbons, or Pins, or any Piece or Parcel of Goods whatſoever, not exceeding the Value of ten Pounds: Every ſuch little Raſcal ſo detected ſhall be deemed guilty of the Breach of this *Commandment*. But it is at the ſame time expreſsly provided and declared, That this ſhall not be conſtrued to extend to People of higher Stations of Life, nor to thoſe greater Articles of Loſs or Gain which may chance to be in diſpute between them, eſpecially to the ſeveral Ranks and Degrees of illuſtrious Perſons commonly called, and known in all polite Aſſembles, by the honourable Title of *The Knights of the Induſtry*. Nor ſhall it extend to thoſe whoſe ſuperior Skill in the Myſteries of the Law, Trade, Commerce, or *'Change-Alley*, ſhall enable them to raiſe Eſtates out of the Follies and Superfluities of their Clients, Dealers, Friends, or Correſpondents, becauſe they are thereby ſerving and promoting the Good of Society, by tranſferring a Property in Lands, Goods, or Chattels from the lazy, ſtupid, worthleſs Part of Mankind, who know not how to uſe, preſerve, and enjoy them, and making them circulate for ſome time, till at laſt they ſettle in the Poſſeſſion of ſome notable clever Fellow, whoſe Poſterity may come to be the Ornaments and Supports of their Country! Much leſs

ought it to extend to thoſe, who having the ſecret Management and Direction of any Great Family, Company, Society, Aſſembly, Poſt, Office or Offices within theſe Realms, ſhall ſecure to themſelves ſuch Emoluments, Salaries, Grants, Penſions, Profits, and Advantages, as have been always deemed the juſt and reaſonable Perquiſites of their ſeveral Poſts and Offices, and which the ſenſible and judicious Part of Mankind, who have been in the Secret of their Affairs can ſcarce think to be a proper and ſufficient Reward for all the Labour, the Vigilance, the Attention, the Application, and Integrity they have exerted in the Courſe of a long Adminiſtration.

The *Ninth Commandment* ſeems, upon a general View, to be a very juſt and reaſonable Injunction, for ſecuring the Credit, Reputation, Peace, and Welfare of private Perſons, Families, and Societies, by diſcouraging and forbidding all falſe Evidence, malicious Lyes, abuſive Stories, and injurious Fictions, that may tend to the Obſtruction of Juſtice, the Prejudice of any Man's Fortune, the Ruin of his Credit, and the Loſs of his Character; but it is thought reaſonable and adviſable to qualify this general Prohibition by three Salvo's or Exceptions in Favour of public Miniſters, Courts of Juſtice, and Tea-tables.

Be it therefore enacted, That from and after the Day of next enſuing, no Perſon or Perſons ſhall preſume to bear falſe Witneſs, or give falſe Evidence, before any of his Majeſty's Juſtices of the Peace, either in their Petty, or Quarter-Seſſions, in any Cauſe or Matter whatſoever, to the Obſtruction or Delay of Juſtice, to the Prejudice of

of any Party, to the ſeveral Suits that may, from time to time, be brought before them. Nor ſhall it be lawful for any Perſon or Perſons to contrive, utter, or publiſh malicious Lyes, officious Falſhoods, or unjuſt Reflections, upon any Perſon or Perſons, to the Prejudice of their Credit, the Loſs of their Characters, the Grief and Diſquiet of their Minds, or any other Kind or Degree of Loſs or Suffering whatſoever, ſaving and excepting ſuch Perſons and Caſes as are herein after excepted. That is to ſay,

1. That this Command ſhall not be deemed to extend to Court-Favourites, Royal Minions, Firſt Miniſters, Secretaries of State, Privy-Counſellors, Decypherers, Spies, Pimps, and Informers; nor to their ſeveral Officers, Servants, and Domeſtics, who, by their Places and Stations, may reaſonably be preſumed to be in the Intereſt and Secrets of their reſpective Maſters and Superiors; who could not duly diſcharge the Duties of their ſeveral Stations, if they were to be confined to the ſtricteſt Rules of Truth and Sincerity: On the other hand, it appears, that political Falſhoods have in all Ages been found to be of ſingular Uſe and Benefit to Kings and Princes, as well as to their Countries and Subjects; ſuch as the diſgracing and removing corrupt Miniſters, and getting the Adminiſtration into cleaner Hands, keeping out of the Royal Preſence and Favour ſuch Perſons as would certainly make a corrupt Uſe of it; the ſupplanting Rivals and Competitors for Poſts of Honour and Truſt about their Royal Maſter; the attainting and demoliſhing a dangerous over-grown Subject, in order to prevent his doing Miſchief, and getting his great Eſtates and Riches divided amongſt a Number of

of honeſt Gentlemen, who ſpend their whole Time, and exert all their Faculties, in the Service of their King and Country. Now, as all theſe Fictions, Inventions, and Falſhoods, were intirely calculated for the Benefit and Good of Society, they have not the Form and Eſſence of Lying, but are to be conſidered under the Notions of Feints and Stratagems in War: *Dolus an virtus quis in hoſte requirit?* Laſtly, it appears plainly from Hiſtory, that they have more than once been of excellent Uſe in promoting and procuring the unſpeakable Bleſſing of glorious and happy Revolutions in many Kingdoms and Countries; beſides many other excellent and uſeful Purpoſes, too long and too many to be particularly enumerated.

2. That this ſhall not extend to any of his Majeſty's Courts in *Weſtminſter-Hall*; where an Evidence, literally and materially falſe, may yet be intentionally and formally good, and anſwer all the Uſes and Purpoſes of Juſtice, Truth, and Charity, by determining and finiſhing a tedious, expenſive Suit, that would otherwiſe infallibly terminate in the Ruin of both Parties; and, notwithſtanding all Appearance of Injuſtice and Cruelty, may be in its Conſequences as great an Act of Mercy, as giving a *Coup de Grace* to a dying Malefactor, which ſhortens his Agonies, and at once puts him out of his Pain.

3. This ſhall not be extended in its extreme Rigour to thoſe little polite Aſſemblies, called *Tea-tables*; becauſe, if they were ſtrictly confined to the Words of Truth and Soberneſs, and forbid thoſe little Flights, Excurſions, and Deviations from Truth, which ge-

nerally enliven and brighten the Audience, the Converſation would quickly grow flat and inſipid, and the prettieſt Orators in the Circle would be inſenſibly deprived of the Benefit and Freedom of Speech. And as it is univerſally known and acknowledged, that the *dear Angels* have no Gall nor Malice at Heart, no Spleen, Jealouſies, Emulations, Competitions, or Envy againſt the reſt of their Sex; but only utter the Overflowings of their good Senſe, good Nature, and Zeal for Virtue; therefore, if any very pretty Creature ſhould, whilſt ſhe is cooling her Diſh, or doubling her Bread and Butter, let fall any Word or Expreſſion that has the Appearance of Invective or Satire, any Fling, Flirt, Hint, or Inuendo, that may ſeem to expoſe or ridicule the Shape, Air, Mien, Complexion, Dreſs, good Senſe, or Conduct of any of her pretty Fellow-creatures; in all ſuch Caſes, they muſt, and ought, and ſhall be indulged in ſuch innocent Liberties, which are apparently intended only to divert and inſtruct the Company, and diſplay their own good Taſte, Wit, and Eloquence, in Oppoſition to the falſe Taſte, the ill Manners, the Follies and Vices of the reſt of their Sex.

The *Tenth Commandment* appears to be quite unreaſonable, if not abſolutely impracticable, being a direct "Contradiction to the great and fundamental Ar-"ticle of natural Religion, which is TO FOL-"LOW NATURE, *i. e.* thoſe Inclinations, Pro-"penſions, and Deſires, which the Author of our "Nature has implanted in us, in order to determine "our Conduct and Behaviour; for to be ſure he "would never have planted thoſe Inclinations in us, "if he had not deſigned we ſhould gratify them; it "being

" being utterly inconſiſtent with his Wiſdom and " Goodneſs to give us Appetites and Deſires, for no " other End but that we ſhould check and reſtrain " them*." Now let us put the Caſe, that a Man has no Wife of his own, and can find no agreeable Female that he could like to make his Companion for Life, or ſuppoſe him to be already yoked to a ſour, diſagreeable, ill-nature Creature, that has extinguiſhed the very Sparks of conjugal Affection; and that he ſees his Friend or his Neighbour happy in the Enjoyment of a beautiful, tender, ſenſible, good-natured Spouſe, is it not natural for ſuch a Perſon to wiſh at leaſt that he could make an Exchange, or ſhare in the Happineſs of his Neighbour? Is it not natural for him to wiſh himſelf in his Neighbour's Condition? Is any thing more common, or more natural than to hear People wiſhing they had ſuch a charming Woman, ſuch a fine Houſe, ſuch a pretty Eſtate, ſuch a beautiful Horſe, or Set of Horſes, Plate, or China, *ſo that nobody were the worſe for it.* This is a righteous ſaving Clauſe, and takes away all the Iniquity and Injuſtice that can be ſuppoſed in the Act of coveting or deſiring any kind or manner of Thing, that is the Poſſeſſion or Property of another. No manner of Queſtion can be made, that, if I like any other Man's Eſtate, Houſe, Goods, or Chattels, and he conſent to part with them for a valuable Conſideration; it is conſiſtent with the moſt rigid Notions of commutative Juſtice, that I have a legal Intereſt, Right, and Title to the ſaid Eſtate, Houſe, Goods, and Chattels, ſo conveyed to me by their true and lawful Owner. But in the Caſe of a Wife, the Right is ſtill clearer, and

* Principles of Deiſm ſet in a true Light, *p.* 44.

the

the Title more unexceptionable; for if any one Man take it in his Head to covet or be in love with another Man's Wife, and the Husband of the said Wife think it reasonable, for certain valuable Considerations, to transfer the Use at least, if not the Property, of his said Wife, to the Person so bargaining, covenanting, and purchasing the same; and if the said Wife be considered as a Party willing and consenting to the said Deed of Bargain, Sale, Loan, Gift, or Exchange, you have then clearly three Parties to the Deed; whereas, in the other Cases above-mentioned, you could have but two. Upon these Considerations,

Be it therefore enacted, That from and after the Day of next ensuing, no Person or Persons, of what Rank, Quality, or Degree soever, shall presume to attempt, by Fraud or Violence, to take, hold, or enjoy any Man's Wife, House, Servants, Cattle, or any manner or kind of Property whatsoever, unless by mutual Contract, Agreement, Bargain, or Sale, the Use or Property of the said valuable Goods, Chattels, Estates, or Commodities be fairly transferred from the one to the other; and that upon such Contract, fairly and legally made and executed, a Man shall be deemed to have the same Right and Title to the Use, Occupation, Enjoyment, or Possession of the said valuable Goods, Estates, and Commodities as the former Owner or Possessor was ever conceived to have, or could possibly convey to another.

And for the better and more effectual Publication and Observance of the several Articles and Matters enjoined and commanded by this Act, it is hereby further provided and enacted, That from and after the Day of next ensuing, This Act shall

ſhall be conſidered and regarded as a legal and parliamentary Expoſition of the ſaid Ten Commandments; and that all Parſons, Vicars, and Curates, in their Expoſition of the Church Catechiſm, commonly ſo called, do, on every ſuch Occaſion, make the aforeſaid Declaration with a diſtinct and audible Voice, repeating the ſame three ſeveral times. And foraſmuch as People of Rank and Figure, who, by the Indulgence of this Act, are excuſed from attending the Service of the Church, may poſſibly, through Forgetfulneſs, or Prejudices of Education, relapſe into the old Superſtition, it is further provided, that it be an Inſtruction to the ſeveral Clerks of the Peace in every County in *Great-Britain*, that this Act be read by the Cryer of the Court at every Quarter-Seſſions, that all Gentlemen there preſent may be duly appriſed of the many Privileges and Exemptions to which they are intitled by the Benefit of this Act.

And, for the further Security and Enforcement of the ſeveral Articles and Matters contained in this Act, it is further provided and enjoined, That from and after the Day and Month above-ſaid, no Printer, Publiſher, Bookſeller, Pamphletſeller, Hawker, or Pedlar, or any other Perſon or Perſons whatſoever, ſhall preſume to print, publiſh, vend, ſell, or ſet to ſale any Edition of the ſaid *Ten Commandments*, in any Volume, Form, Shape, or Manner whatſoever, without having this Act printed, and bound up together with them, under the Penalty of five Pounds for every ſuch Offence.

You ſee, by this rough Draught, the Nature and Deſign of this Propoſal, in which, if our Repreſentatives ſhall diſcover nothing, but what is highly reaſonable

ſonable and expedient for the Welfare of the Public, I cannot but hope for their favourable Attention; and I cannot doubt but that there will be found proper Perſons enough, who ſhall be both willing and able to prepare and bring in the ſaid Bill.

I am, SIR,

Your faithful humble Servant.

THE

THE CONTEMPT OF THE CLERGY CONSIDERED.

IN A

LETTER to a FRIEND.

THE

CONTEMPT of the CLERGY

CONSIDERED.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR late Converſation at —— has made a ſtrong Impreſſion upon me ever ſince. As my natural Taciturnity inclined me rather to hear than to talk, I was the more attentive to what paſſed, and am more able to recollect the many juſt and ſprightly Things that were ſaid by others. And as I have no Averſion to Religion in general, nor to any particular Order or Body of Men, I may perhaps be able to judge more impartially of the Subject before us than ſome of the Company, who ſeemed rather to expreſs their Prejudice and Reſentment than their cool impartial Sentiment of Men and Things.

You could not (I dare ſay) help obſerving Sir *Harry*'s Behaviour on the Occaſion; he declaimed without Mercy; he libelled and aggravated like a Bill in Chancery, in ſuch a Manner, and in ſuch Language, as I could never have expected from his natural Candor and good Underſtanding; but I ſince underſtand, he has been foiled in his late Ruffle with the Doctor;

and that the Biſhop of —— has raiſed his Fine in the laſt Renewal of his great Leaſe. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ!* And when a Man's Paſſions have been raiſed by Self-intereſt and Vanity, no Wonder they are not to be compoſed by Reaſon and Juſtice. For my own part, though I am not ſo ſtaunch a Believer, nor ſo good a Chriſtian, as perhaps I ought to be; yet I believe in God, and endeavour to ſerve him to the beſt of my Knowledge: I have an intire and cordial Benevolence for all my Fellow-creatures, eſpecially my own Species, which obliges me to perform all the Duties of a good Citizen, a good Neighbour, and a good Friend. I conſider all Mankind as my Brethren; I would never neglect or forſake a Friend, nor injure or oppreſs an Enemy. *Homo ſum, & nihil humani a me alienum puto.* And have always made it the inviolable Rule of my Conduct, to do to every Man as I could wiſh they ſhould do unto me: And, therefore, though a Lay-man and a Freethinker, I have no more Averſion to a black Coat, than I have to a red one, and think a Roſe Hatband as inoffenſive to a Man of Senſe as a Cockade.—And to deal plainly with you, I did not think the accuſed Party had fair Play among us; they were accuſed without legal Evidence, and condemned without legal Proof. Not a Man in the Company dared to ſpeak in their Behalf, much leſs to appear as an Advocate for them, to traverſe the Indictment, to croſs-examine the Witneſſes, to put the moſt candid and equitable Conſtruction upon ſuſpicious Appearances. A Privilege which the Law allows to the vileſt Criminals. So that we were, in ſhort, more like a Court of Inquiſition, than an impartial Court of Juſtice; we were Parties

and Judges at the ſame time. I could not help thinking this a very unreaſonable way of proceeding, and therefore reſolved, at my Leiſure, to give the Cauſe a Rehearing in my own *Court of Conſcience*, and communicate my Thoughts to you, whom I know to be, as well as myſelf, a Friend to Truth and Juſtice, and a Lover of Mankind.

I ſmile to myſelf to think what a hearty Laugh you and your merry Neighbour will have, upon peruſing this Epiſtle, and how many ſcurvy Jokes will be cracked over this poor Head of mine, that I of all Men living ſhould at this time of Day turn Advocate for the Clergy, whoſe Degeneracy and Corruptions you have ſo often heard me condemn. But pray, Gentlemen, compoſe your Muſcles, and be ſerious for half an Hour. Remember I take no Fee. We proceed *in formâ pauperis*; I undertake the Cauſe with the ſame Diſintereſt as ſome of our Brethren did poor *Woolſton*'s Caſe, who was perſecuted almoſt to Death for nothing at all but a little Blaſphemy, as the Believers call it. I pretend to no more than to open the Cauſe as a *Puiſne Council*, which perhaps may be ſeconded and ſupported by ſome Perſon of greater Abilities.

In managing this Debate, I ſhall conſider the Church of *England* only as a human legal Eſtabliſhment, and the Clergy as a Society or Body incorporate by a Royal Charter, endowed with certain Privileges and Immunities, as the *South-Sea* and *India* Companies, or the Bank of *England*. Their Pretenſions to a more ancient Eſtabliſhment, founded on a Charter from Heaven, is an Article that does not come ſo properly before us; I ſhall therefore leave it to be defended by

themſelves, before more competent Judges. Conſider them only as a Society incorporate by Charter, they have certainly a legal Right to all the Privileges conveyed by that Charter, till it be recalled by a competent Authority, which in Equity and good Policy ought not to be, till it either appear to be inconſiſtent with the public Good, or that, by Male-practice, they have forfeited their Title to thoſe Privileges, the Favour of their Prince, and the Protection of the Law.

The Being of a God, and the Neceſſity of Religion and religious Worſhip under ſome Form or other, has been the univerſal Believe of all Ages and all Nations, which neceſſarily implies a Separation of certain Times, Places, Things, and Perſons from common Uſe, to be devoted and appropriated to that Service. On which Account, in the moſt early Records, we meet with *Temples*, *Sacrifices*, *Altars*, *Feſtivals*, *Prieſts*, &c. dedicated to the Service of their reſpective Deities. To offer at a particular and diſtinct Proof of this evident Truth, would be an Affront to a Perſon of your Learning and good Senſe, and to the Credit of univerſal Hiſtory and Tradition. The abſurd Cavils that have been made againſt it are too trifling to deſerve a ſerious Anſwer. Whether this univerſal Agreement of Mankind were owing to a general or particular Revelation from Heaven, or from the apparent Uſefulneſs of Religion to promote the Welfare of Mankind, and the Ends of civil Government, has been diſputed. But to me there ſeems to be a ſtrong Preſumption that it was owing to both, and that the one was the Conſequence of the other. Now if the Inſtitution of Religion be owing to ſo divine an Original, and if Reaſon and Experience ſhew it to

be of ſuch real Advantage to Mankind, no Wonder it has ever been regarded by wiſe and good Governors, as the great Bleſſing and Support of Government, and been defended and protected accordingly. And this could never be done but by making it a national Eſtabliſhment, and guarding it by proper Laws and Sanctions from the Invaſions and Contempt of the Profligate and Profane: And that this was the Caſe in fact, we affirm, and humbly preſume cannot eaſily be diſproved.

We come now, in the firſt Place, to a diſtinct Examination of the general Charge brought againſt the Clergy, and the particular Allegations brought to ſupport it.

Secondly, to conſider what may and ought to be fairly produced, to remove or extenuate the Guilt with which they are charged, and to fix it with all its infamous Conſequences where it ought to reſt.

The gloomy Mr. *W*—, whom you know to be a great Dealer in Suſpicions, ſecret Hiſtory, and ſly Inuendo's, begun with ſeveral unlucky Quotations from *Tacitus* and *Salluſt*, which he imagined every body knew how to apply to Parallels among ourſelves. He grumbled much about *Sacerdotia Venalia*, and told us how often the High-Prieſthood among the *Jews* had been bought and ſold to the beſt Bidder. He might have added too, that the *Roman* Empire itſelf had been ſet to ſale, as other States and Kingdoms have been ſince. But what is all this to the Purpoſe? This proves nothing; this is only ſuppoſing and in-

ſinuating Crimes too groſs to be believed, too dangerous to be directly charged without Proof, and impoſſible to be proved. Nor, indeed, was there any Occaſion for *Suſpicions* and *Inuendo's*; there were too many Articles directly charged, and ſome of them too plainly proved to be defended or excuſed, but not enough to ſupport ſo general an Accuſation as is brought againſt the whole Order. Some of theſe Articles more immediately concerned the ſuperior Orders, the Prelates, and Dignitaries. Others, the parochial Clergy, Rectors, Vicars, and Curates. Thoſe againſt the Superior, were,

I. Ambition and Avarice.

II. Their ſervile Application and Attachment to Men in Power.

III. The corrupt Uſe they make of their Revenues, their miſapplying the Patrimony of the Church, which was deſigned for the Support of Charity and Hoſpitality, to Luxury and Vanity; and filling the moſt valuable Preferments with their own Children, Relations, and Sycophants, without any Reſpect ſo much as to a *Cæteris Paribus.*

IV. Their Non-Reſidence, Pluralities, and Commendams.

Thoſe againſt the Inferior were general, indefinite, random Accuſations, ſuch as Pride, Pedantry, Ill-manners, Hypocriſy, Neglect of their Cures, and a long—long—*&c.*

Sir

Sir *Harry*, whose long Attendance on Parliament, and thorough Knowledge of Affairs in high Life, made him better able to judge of Persons and Facts than the rest of the Company, undertook to prove the several Articles, by a long Induction of particular Instances, many of which it must be owned were too notorious and scandalous to be denied or defended. But these were all particular Cases, personal Crimes, which justly consign the Guilty to Shame and Repentance; but do by no means affect the whole Body or Society, or the Charter by which they are supposed to subsist: It would be thought, in all other Cases, a very unreasonable way of proceeding, to charge the Faults of a few unworthy Members upon the whole Society. Nay farther, if a corrupt wicked Majority should be thought a sufficient Reason for destroying any corporate Body, Society, Order, or Profession of Men, some of our Acquaintance ought to look to themselves, and be at least as sagacious as Rats to fly from a falling House. It would be endless to review and examine the several Facts charged against particular Persons, some of which, I fear, nay, I know, to be too true; I shall only consider the general Charge against the whole Body, and see how far they may and ought to be defended, and how little Ground there is for the Clamours raised against them.

The *Ambition and Avarice of the Clergy* has, at all times, been the Cry of those that hate them, and wish the Destruction of their Order. The Authors and Promoters of the Charge of *Ambition* seem little to understand the Meaning of the Word, or the Nature of the Crime with which they charge them. The Words *Ambire*, *Ambitus*, and *Ambitio*, in Classic Writers,

Writers, are well known to expreſs a very different kind of Guilt than can with Juſtice be charged upon our Clergy. They were rather intended to expreſs the undue and illegal Uſe great Men and overgrown Subjects made of their Wealth and Power, to influence their Inferiors and Dependents in Prejudice to the Freedom of Elections, and the Liberties of the People, who (eſpecially in the Times of the *Roman* Commonwealth) had the Power of beſtowing the great Offices of the State, by a Majority of Votes, on their moſt deſerving Fellow-citizens, of whoſe Merit they were ſuppoſed to be the proper Judges, in the Diſcharge of which Truſt they were to regard nothing but the real Merit of the ſeveral Competitors. Whoſoever, therefore, made uſe of his Intereſt or Power to create Dependencies, or corrupt Influences to prejudice the Integrity of the Electors, and the Freedom of Elections, was ſaid *Ambire*; and the Nature of his Crime was expreſſed by the Word *Ambitus*, againſt which many Laws were made, with the ſame good Intention, and the ſame good Succeſs, as our Acts of Parliament *to prevent Bribery and Corruption*. But can the very Appearance of ſuch a Crime as this be charged upon our Clergy?—Are our Biſhops choſen by the Votes of the Majority? Every body knows the contrary: If not, what ground, what room is there for ſuch an Accuſation?

Well! but (ſay their Enemies) if they are not guilty of the Crime in this particular limited Senſe here explained; yet (which is quite the ſame thing) they are always coveting and aiming at the great Poſts, and honourable Offices in the Church, watching every Opportunity, and employing all their Intereſt

tereſt and Abilities to obtain them. Be it ſo.—Muſt this be imputed to them as a Crime? Is not this as great an Objection to every other Order and Society of Men as againſt the Clergy? Let us look into the Army, the Fleet, the Courts of Juſtice, the City, the corporate Companies, and every petty Country Corporation in *Great-Britain*, you will find juſt the ſame Emulation, the ſame Competitions, the ſame Thirſt of Glory, the ſame Deſire of Pre-eminence, as among the Clergy; only with this Difference, that to them it is never imputed as a Crime, and to the Clergy always.

Let us now conſider the Equity of this Cenſure, and ſee why the ſame equitable Allowances ſhould not be made for all alike. It is plain, that there are, there muſt be, in every regular Society, different Offices and Stations adapted to the different Talents and Capacities of their Members. A State of direct Parity and abſolute Equality cannot be a State of Nature and Order, and can never ſubſiſt but in weak Heads and ſtrong Imaginations. A Society without ſome ſort of Government is a mere *Ens rationis.* Government without Laws, and Laws without a legiſlative and executive Power is direct Abſurdity and Contradiction. Some muſt govern, and others be governed: Some muſt command, and others obey: Some muſt direct, and others ſubmit to Direction. This is the very Voice and Order of Nature. Now then, if in every regular Society there muſt be Offices of Eminence and Diſtinction, to be filled by the moſt deſerving Members, for the Benefit and Support of the Whole; can it be a Crime in any individual Member to endeavour to qualify himſelf, by ſuperior Merit, for thoſe

ſuperior

ſuperior Stations? and thereby recommend himſelf to the Notice and Eſteem of thoſe who are able to advance him? Surely no. This is a laudable Emution, or *Ambition* if you pleaſe, inſeparable from great and ingenuous Minds. This is the great Spur to Induſtry, the great Incentive to generous and arduous Deſigns. Without this, Arts and Sciences, Manufactures and Trades, Navigation and Commerce, and every Branch of ſocial and public Virtue muſt languiſh and decay.——The raw Apprentice ſupports, with Chearfulneſs, a ſeven Years Servitude and Subjection, with the Hopes of being at laſt his own Maſter, and of receiving the ſame Honour and Service from his Juniors as he has paid to his Seniors. He ſometimes fancies himſelf Warden, and then Maſter of his Company; and at laſt Sheriff or Lord-Mayor of the City. The young Cadet who liſts himſelf in the Fleet or Army without Pay, and ſeems to have nothing at heart but Glory and Drubbing, has no inward Affection for Wounds, and Scars, and wooden Legs; has no violent Paſſion for Hunger and Thirſt, Heat and Cold, long Marches, inhoſpitable Quarters, bloody Battles, and deſperate Sieges; but *per Arduа* is the Path to Glory and Preferment, a Regiment and a Truncheon, if not a Star and Garter, are the ultimate Objects he has in view, which ſweetens every Labour and Danger of that difficult and deſperate Service. The young Student at the Inns of Court, that has the leaſt Grain of Spirit and Genius, cannot help fancying himſelf capable of obtaining the higheſt Poſts in the Law, and therefore hopes and endeavours to deſerve and obtain them. His Spirits riſe, and Heart glows with a generous Ardor at thoſe

those Ensigns of Dignity and Grandeur, which attend the Lord High Chancellor of *Great-Britain*; and not one in a thousand is humble enough to fancy himself uncapable of deserving and obtaining them. In short, this innocent Vanity, this generous Emulation is the natural Root, the real Ground of all political Virtue and public Spirit. It is this, and this only, that distinguishes the Generous and the Brave, the Learned and the Worthy, from the ignorant, the Lazy, the Indolent, and Undeserving in all Ranks, Orders, and Professions of Men. And must that generous Emulation, which is the Glory and Support of every other Order and Profession of Men, be thought criminal only in the Clergy! Must they only be afraid to excel! Does either Law or Gospel oblige them to renounce the great and honourable Offices peculiar to their Order! The Apostle tell us, 1 *Tim.* iii. 1. *This is a true Saying that if any Man desire the Office of a Bishop, he desireth a good Work.* And therefore the Desire of such an Office must be a good and laudable Desire. He proceeds to shew what are the proper Qualifications requisite for that high Office; and surely it can be no Offence against Modesty and Decency, for worthy Men so qualified to endeavour by worthy Means to obtain the honourable Rewards of distinguished Merit, superior Learning, Greatness of Mind, Probity of Manners, and Sanctity of Life. It was long ago observed by *Sallust* *, That the Desire of Honour, and Glory, and Power was natural, and

* Nam gloriam, honorem, imperium bonus & ignavus æquè sibi exoptant; sed Ille verâ viâ nititur, huic quià bonæ desunt artes, dolis atque fallaciâ contendit. *Sall.*

therefore

therefore innocent. The Virtuous and the Vicious, the Coward and the Brave, aim at the ſame Thing; the Difference lies only in the different Ways and Means uſed to procure them. The Virtuous and the Brave expect and deſire them only as the Rewards of ſuperior Merit; whilſt the Wicked and the Worthleſs attempt to obtain them by iniquitous Schemes, and villainous Practices. Now if the Enemies of the Clergy can charge them with any ſuch corrupt Methods of obtaining Preferments, if it could be proved that any Man among them had forſaken the plain direct Path of Religion, Virtue, Decency, and Honour, in Purſuit of Preferment, if any could be thought wicked enough to obtain, or attempt to obtain, the Favour of the Great, by unworthy Proſtitutions, baſe Compliances, infamous Jobbs, and dirty Services, let the Infamy and the Shame be all their own. But let not the Innocent be condemned for the Faults of the Guilty; ſuch a Perſon (if ſuch could be found) would, I dare ſay, appear as deſpicable and contemptible to the reſt of his Order, as he juſtly does to the Enemies of Religion.

Let us now conſider the Charge of *Covetouſneſs*, which the Enemies of the Clergy generally fix upon them, which (according to the beſt Obſervations I could ever make) has but two ſlender Topics to ſupport it.

1. Their ſtrict Demand and Exaction of their legal Dues.

2. Their Endeavours to improve the Revenue of the Church, by raiſing their Fines upon Renewal of Eccleſiaſtical Leaſes:

Theſe

These are such poor Pretences to support such a general Infamy, that they scarce deserve an Answer. As to the first Article; the rigid Exaction of their Dues is so far from being a just Ground of Reproach, that it is the direct contrary. They are bound by the strictest Obligation of Conscience and Duty, more than by Interest, to support their Title to the smallest Dues; they would be Traitors to the Community, unjust to their Families, but most of all to their Successors, if they did not. The Clergy are not *Proprietors*; they are no more than *Stewards*, *Guardians*, or *Usufructuaries* of their Revenues; and as they have no Right or Power to alienate or sell their Endowments, so they are under the strongest Obligations to maintain and defend, and (by all just and honourable Means) to improve and increase them. The Lay-Proprietors of Estates are at liberty to make what Abatements they please to their Tenants, and are accountable to no body: Yet shew me the Man that does not rigidly exact their Dues. How rigorously do they demand of their poorest Tenants, the smallest Quit-rents, which a generous compassionate Man could hardly have the Heart to receive? How punctual and exact is your opulent Neighbour, in demanding his Groats and old Hens of his poor Tenants, who want almost the Crumbs that fall from his Table! How unmerciful a Custom does it seem for a Lord of a Manor, upon the Death of a poor Tenant, to take from the disconsolate Widow and Orphans the best live Goods by way of Herriot; when, instead of adding to their Affliction, they should rather be contriving Ways and Means to comfort and support them? Yet shew me one Man

in

in a thouſand that neglects to take the Advantage, and make a Seizure accordingly. To this it is anſwered, and very juſtly, it is an Act of Royalty, annexed to his Manor; and he ſhould be unjuſt to himſelf and Family, and his moſt remote Poſterity, if he ſhould loſe ſo valuable a Right for want of demanding it. Very right!— And now, pray ſhew me a Reaſon, if you can, why the ſame Plea ſhould not have the ſame Force in Defence of the Clergy, as it has for the Laity. In my Opinion, it ought to have much more: The Lay-Proprietors leave their Inheritance to their Children; and though they ſhould drop ſome ſmall Demands, it would ſcarce be felt by the Heirs that inherit their Lands: But the Clergy have nothing but the Uſe, and in many Places the Revenue ariſes chiefly from ſmall Dues. And, as the Son of *Sirach* * ſays, *He that deſpiſes* (theſe) *ſmall Things, ſhall fall by little and little* into great Poverty and Contempt. And when they die, the Poſſeſſion is intirely transferred from the ſurviving Family, who, perhaps, have nothing to ſubſiſt them but the careful Gleanings of theſe *ſmall Things* made by the departed Huſband or Father.

The ſecond Pretence is, that the Clergy are ſevere upon their Tenants, in raiſing their Fines upon renewing of Church-Leaſes. Sir *Harry* flouriſhed much upon this Topic: He cannot digeſt his laſt Fine; the Spirit of Grumbling is ſtrong upon him; and will not ſuffer him to think, or talk, or hearken to Reaſon. This (he ſays) was ſuch a Piece of Op-

* Ecclus. xix. 1.

preſſion,

preſſion in the Biſhop, as he can never forgive; though we all know it is no more than he does to all his own Tenants, whenever they want to renew.— So abſurd and inconſiſtent are Men, even Men of Senſe, when blinded by Prejudice and Vanity; they condemn thoſe Things in others, which they think excuſable and commendable in themſelves. *I remember the Time*, (ſays Sir *Harry*) *when Biſhops and Chapter Leaſes were almoſt as good as Free-Land; then the Tenants of the Church proſpered, and had an Affection and Eſteem for their Landlords: But now they rack us up to the laſt Shilling.* Hold, Sir *Harry*—not ſo faſt. They muſt, I believe, for very obvious Reaſons, be ſtill the beſt Landlords; and if they could live upon good Words and fair Speeches, and the Affections of their Tenants, without taking any Fines, they would be much better; and if they would take nothing at all, they would be better ſtill.—Pray, give me leave to aſk a ſerious Queſtion: If a Clergyman were to come to you to take a Leaſe for three Lives of his Children, and the Widowhood of his Wife; How would you behave? in what manner would you treat with him? Would you have any Regard for the perſonal Merit of the Purchaſer? Would you make him any Abatement in his Fine, upon the Account of his ſuperior Learning or exemplary Piety, or would you indulge him in two or three advantageous Articles in his Leaſe, purely for being a Believer and Defender of all the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith? Would you regard any thing but the real Value of the Eſtate? And would you part with it without a valuable Conſideration? Aſk yourſelf, and anſwer yourſelf.—And give me a Reaſon, if you can, why the Clergy ought to

deal better by you than you would do by them; especially, when you consider, that all the Interest to the Family of the Possessor must arise from such Contingencies as these during his Life-time. And that Clergyman, who, in the Decline of his Life, and perhaps strait Circumstances, shall refuse to accept of an unworthy Consideration to fill up a Lease to the Prejudice of his Successors, deserves to have his Statue erected, and his Family maintained, at the Expence of *the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy.*

The next Accusation against them, is their servile Application and Attachment to Men in Power.

A servile Application, and corrupt Attachment to Men in Power, is a Reproach to any Man of an ingenuous Spirit and liberal Education; but especially to a Clergyman, whose Profession ought to make him as incapable of exerting a corrupt Influence on any Person, or any Occasion, as of submitting to it from others: But a decent Reverence and proper Regard for their Superiors, who are presumed to be the best Judges of Merit, and best able to encourage and reward it, is not only an Act of Justice, but of good Policy and sound Prudence. Do not Men in all Professions of Life do the same? Every Man that is blessed with superior Talents, and is not depressed by Want or Modesty, cannot help exerting that Superiority upon proper Occasions: And where can he so properly or so prudently do it, as under the Inspection of those, who are most likely to observe, distinguish, and reward it? If there be really any Patron so wicked, as to insist upon dishonourable Terms

Terms to engage his Favour, and obtain Preferment: If there be any Clergyman ſo abject and corrupt, as to comply with ſuch Terms, let their Names be produced, let their Guilt be plainly proved, and let them be branded with all the Marks of Infamy and Diſgrace, which ſuch Crimes deſerve. But let not the whole Order ſuffer for mere Suſpicions of Guilt charged only upon a few, and deteſted by a great Majority of the beſt and moſt valuable Men of their Order.— It muſt be confeſſed, that Men of weak Heads, and corrupt Hearts, have too often miſtaken the true Nature of Gratitude, and have extended it far beyond the Bounds of Reaſon, Juſtice, and Truth, who think themſelves bound to ſacrifice every Principle of Virtue and Honour, and every Conviction of Conſcience, to thoſe who have been, or promiſed to be, the Authors or Inſtruments of their Promotion; who think themſelves obliged to ſacrifice their Souls to them that gave them Bread; to follow their Leaders; to obey every Word of Command; and who, upon Non-compliance, are under the ſame Terrors with the Gentlemen of the Army for Mutiny and Deſertion. If any ſuch are now in Being, we give them up, we have nothing to plead in their Excuſe.— They are deteſted (as I ſaid before) by a great Majority of their own Order; deſpiſed as infamous Tools, by thoſe who employ them; and condemned by the impartial Judgment of their own Conſciences, to whoſe terrible Diſcipline and Correction we leave them.

Let us turn our Eyes to a more agreeable Proſpect.— To Numbers of honeſt, generous Hearts, who ſcorn ſuch abject Compliances; who would

prefer honeſt Poverty to diſhonourable Promotion, and would ſooner ſubmit to a Livery and Shoulder-knot, than to an infamous Proſtitution of Character.

It is reported of Dr. *Kidder*, who was made Biſhop of *Bath* and *Wells*, upon the Deprivation of Biſhop *Kenn*, that he had once the Honour to be entertained in a Great Man's Cloſet, who propoſed a Piece of Service to him, which threw him into great Perplexity and Confuſion;—— but after ſome Recollection he begged to be excuſed; being preſſed over and over, he at laſt abſolutely refuſed. How, my Lord! (ſaid the Great Man, in a great Paſſion) do you refuſe me? Don't you conſider that you eat the K—g's Bread? No, my Lord, (replied the Biſhop) I eat no Man's Bread but good Biſhop *Kenn*'s; and if he will but conſent to eat his Bread himſelf, I will freely give it up to him this Moment.

The third Article of the Charge againſt them is, their miſapplying the Revenues of the Church, and filling up their beſt Preferments with their own Children, Relations, and Sycophants, without any Regard to real Merit.

This is a looſe, general Accuſation, and requires more particular evident Proofs to ſupport it, than (we humbly conceive) can ever be produced. But, ſuppoſing it in a great meaſure true; can a Chriſtian Biſhop give a better Proof of his reverend Eſteem and Affection for the Church, than by devoting his own Children to that Service? Is it not more for their Honour, and Chriſtian Reputation, than to raiſe

Eſtates

Eſtates for them by Parſimony and Oppreſſion, in order to ſupport them in Ignorance and Luxury? And ought it to be objected to them as a Crime, that they beſtow their beſt Preferments (ſuppoſing the Fact could be proved) upon their own Children and neareſt Friends? Do not Nature and common Prudence demand it? And ought any Man to be called partial and unjuſt, for preferring his own deſerving Children and Friends before Strangers, though apparently of equal Merit?— But it is inſinuated, That real Merit is no Part of the Conſideration; That though they might, and perhaps ought to be, preferred before Strangers, *(cæteris paribus,)* yet they prefer People of no Merit at all, purely for the Sake of Relation; whilſt others of real Merit and Character are neglected and diſcouraged. This Objection ſeems to be the Language of Diſappointment and Reſentment. It is more than probable, that when a good Preferment was vacant, there were more than one or two who thought it very convenient for them; that they had Merit enough to deſerve it, and therefore Confidence enough to expect it; who, upon being diſappointed, would naturally think themſelves injured, and expreſſed their Reſentments by depreciating other Mens Characters, and exalting their own. The Biſhop has, however, in this Reſpect, one certain Advantage, that he cannot eaſily be deceived in the Character of his *Clerk*; whoſe Talents, Education, Principles, and Manner of Life, he muſt be better able to judge of than of Strangers, whoſe Merit muſt depend chiefly on the Teſtimonies of others; and how unfairly ſuch Teſtimonials are too often procured, need not to be mentioned in this Place.

I come now to the fourth Article, of *Pluralities*, *Non-Reſidence*, and *Commendams:* And, indeed —— upon this Head—— I muſt needs ſay, with the ſage Sir *Roger de Coverley* *, *Much may be ſaid on both Sides.* They cannot be intirely defended, nor muſt they be abſolutely condemned. They are in ſome Caſes, not only lawful and expedient, but neceſſary; and in others ſcandalous and abominable. Where the Revenues of one Benefice are not ſufficient to ſupport the Dignity of the Office to which it is annexed, there it is highly juſt and reaſonable that a proper Addition ſhould be made to ſupply the Deficiency. This is particularly the Caſe of our ſmalleſt Biſhoprics; they are not ſufficient to ſupport that Hoſpitality, expenſive Attendance on Parliament, and decent Figure in Life, which are neceſſary for Men in ſuch exalted Stations; and have therefore generally the comfortable Addition of ſome Dignity or Benefice, which are held *in Commendam.* So far is juſt and right. But to ſee Men without any laudable Diſtinction of Character or Station, groaning under a Load of Preferments, which they neither deſerve nor become, is ſcandalous and ſhameful.—We ſhall leave this Article to the ſerious Conſideration of thoſe who are chiefly concerned, who enjoy this invidious Accumulation of Honours and Preferments: We beg them ſeriouſly to examine their own Hearts, with what Views, and on what Pretenſions, they firſt ſought them; by what Methods they obtained them, and what Uſe they make of them. If, in this Inquiry, their Hearts condemn them not, neither do we con-

* Spectator 122.

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demn them: If they employ their large Revenues to the Glory of God, the Encouragement of Piety and Learning, the Relief of the Needy, and the Assistance of the Helpless; the Testimony of their Consciences, and the Approbation and Applauses of good Men, will be an Overbalance against all the malicious Censures of those that envy their Prosperity, and hate their Order. But if their own Hearts condemn them; if they and the World about them know that they spend their large Revenues (which are committed to them as a sacred Trust) in Luxury and Vanity; if they are intirely directed by secular Views and worldly Interests; if their Hearts are set upon Equipage and Show, making a Figure, and inriching a Family; let such know they are unworthy of such Distinctions, and deserve all that Contempt which is justly poured upon them, by the best Friends as well as Enemies of their Order. But the general Charge against the whole Body of the Clergy, is so far from being true, that it is the direct contrary. And we dare affirm, that of the great Number of religious and learned Foundations, Schools, Colleges, Churches, and Hospitals, which are the Glory of our Nation, much the greater Part are owing to the Generosity and Munificence of the Clergy, which appears from the Records of their respective Foundations.

I proceed now to consider the general Charge against the inferior Clergy, viz. *Pride*, *Pedantry*, *Ill-manners*, *Idleness*, and *Neglect of their Cures*, &c.———&c. I, who have passed through many Scenes of Life as a silent and impartial Spectator, have made it a general Remark, that *Pride*, *Pedan-*

try, &c. are moſt commonly charged by their Enemies upon the moſt deſerving; and that Idleneſs and Neglect of their Cures are always charged by their Friends on the moſt worthleſs Part of their Order. There are, without doubt, too many among them that too well deſerve theſe Imputations; but muſt all ſuffer for their Sakes? Becauſe *Juſtice*, *Wreathock*, and *Carr*, were Villains, muſt all the Lawyers be ſent to *Tyburn*, or the Plantations! Becauſe there have been Murderers and Raviſhers among the Gentlemen of the Army, muſt we therefore diſband them, and ſend them all to the D—l! No; let the Guilty only be condemned, let the rotten offenſive Member be cut off, that the whole Body periſh not. But let us come to a more particular Examination of this accumulated Charge, which the Enemies of the Clergy frequently alledge to juſtify their contemptuous Behaviour towards them. It muſt be owned, that the Clergy in and about Town, have no Reaſon to complain of Contempt, they have their full Portion of Reſpect and Eſteem; and in other Cities and great Towns in proportion. Whether it be that the better Sort of Clergy are uſually fixed in thoſe large conſpicuous Cures; or whether they are more careful to ſupport their Characters, where they know themſelves to be under the Obſervation and Cenſures of Men of Taſte and Figure, but ſo it is— and the further you remove from thoſe Places, you gradually decline to Barbariſm and Obſcurity. There are, to my particular Knowledge, in many Country Villages, Clergymen of diſtinguiſhed Learning and Piety, who are, as it were, buried alive among the Vicious and the Ignorant, and in a manner excluded from all the Comforts of

ſocial

ſocial Life. And how ſhould it be otherwiſe, except where the 'Squire or Great Men of the Pariſh or Neighbourhood be Judges and Lovers of real Merit. And how often that is the Caſe, I leave you to judge. If the 'Squire happen to be wrong-headed, illiterate, ſottiſh, or profane, what can the poor Parſon do? Can there be any Agreement between Senſe and Nonſenſe, any Concord betwixt Virtue and Vice, any Communion betwixt Light and Darkneſs? If they ſhould ever deſcend ſo low, as to invite the poor Vicar from his Solitude, *Soup Maîgre*, and Watch-light, to make one in a Party of Frolic and Madneſs, and he ſhould refuſe the Invitation, or come awkwardly into it; if he ſhould refuſe to go to the utmoſt Stretch of Intemperance; or diſreliſh the many ungracious Jokes which are always cracked over the Doctor; it gives a Sort of Check to the Merriment, and throws a Damp upon the Spirits of the good Company; they immediately treat him with that Indifference and Contempt (if not with Rudeneſs and Ill-manners) as may ſufficiently diſcourage him from ever venturing among them again. From that Moment he has a Mark of Contempt fixed upon him, as a *ſour*, *moroſe*, *ill-natured Fellow*. If he ſhould ever take a decent Opportunity of ſhewing theſe Gentlemen their true Characters, and attempt to convince them of their abſurd, irregular, licentious, hopeleſs Way of Life, though they ſhould ſeem to hear it with Patience, yet they never heartily forgive the Impertinence of the officious Reprover; that Reſentment ſeldom fails to produce Rancour and Averſion; and from that Moment every thing takes a wrong Turn: The moſt innocent Words and Actions are miſrepreſented;

ſented; and the moſt general Reflections upon any one Vice, even in the Pulpit, are interpreted as a Satire or Libel upon the 'Squire and his Friends, who return him the Compliment of an *unmannerly, ill-bred Coxcomb.* If, at any time, he ſhould have the Courage to interrupt a profane lewd Converſation, and with a decent Aſſurance rally and expoſe their Ignorance, which is the real Root of Infidelity, if he attempt to reduce them from Rattle and Tumult, from lewd Jokes and loud Laughter, to cool and impartial Reaſoning, to which they are abſolute Strangers, they cover their Confuſion as well as they can, with an affected Superiority of Taſte or Quality, of Front or Fortune, and ever after condemn and avoid the impertinent Reformer, for an *inſolent inſupportable Pedant.*

When I was at *Bath* laſt Year, I was invited by a Gentleman who lodged in the ſame Houſe, to go and ſpend a month with him at his Seat in *Somerſetſhire.* I readily accepted his Invitation, and went with him. We came thither on a *Friday* Night, and on the *Sunday* Morning I was preparing to go to Church, which I always look upon as a decent Compliment to my Superiors, who have been pleaſed to make the Chriſtian Religion a national Eſtabliſhment; but my Friend took me out to walk in his Park, and ſhew me the Beauties of his Situation. The next *Sunday* he contrived ſome other Amuſement to hinder our going to Church. There was indeed a Clergyman in the Houſe, who had quite laid aſide his ſacerdotal Character, but acted in ſeveral Lay-capacities, as Valet-de-Chambre, Butler, Game-keeper, Pot-companion, Butt, and Buffoon, who never read Prayers, or ſo much

much as said Grace in the Family whilst I was in it. Nay don't laugh, whatever my own Sentiments or Practice may be, yet you must own my Charrcter is consistent; I an all of a piece; my sentiments and Practice agree, and I have a much better Opinion of a Man that pretends to no Sort of religious Principles, than I can have of one whose Practice is a direct Contradiction to his Profession. This by the way. —Upon my asking the Character of the Vicar, whose Face I had never seen, or scarce heard his Name mentioned, he was represented as a *proud*, *unmannerly*, *sour Pedant*; who could never be an agreeable Companion to People of Taste and Politeness. The next *Sunday* my Curiosity led me to Church, whilst my Friend staid at home to settle an Account with his Bailiff; where I had the Pleasure of hearing a very plain, rational Discourse, delivered with a decent Warmth, and a manly Authority. After Service, seeing me to be a Stranger, he pressed me in a very obliging Manner to dine with him, which I excused, but took half an Hour's Walk with him in his Garden before Dinner, and quickly found him to be a very learned, well-bred, religious Man; but one that was resolved to support his sacred Character, and not prostitute the Dignity of his Function, nor his superior Understanding, to the Vanity and Contempt of Ignorance and Folly. This was sufficient to exclude him from all the social Comforts of good Neighbourhood; whilst a dirty Wretch, who seemed to live in Defiance of Virtue, Decency, good Manners, and clean Linen, was in a good measure the first Minister and Director of the Family; always mentioned with the

the familiar Appellation of *honeſt Harry*, a merry good-natured Fellow as ever broke Bread.

And that this is the Caſe of Numbers beſides, I am convinced by my own Experience and Obſervation of Mankind. A due Regard to a Man's Character, and the natural Obligations that ariſe from it, is called *Pride*. A decent Reproof of the Wealthy and Proud, is called *Ill-manners*: A juſt Cenſure of the Diſſolute and Licentious, is called *Ill-nature*: And talking the Language of Scripture, natural Religion, Reaſon, and Philoſophy, is called *Impertinence* and *Pedantry*.

I often think, if the Apoſtle of the *Gentiles* were to come amongſt us once more, without the Power of working Miracles, what a poor Figure he would make! He could never expect any thing better than a petty School, or a poor Curacy in the Country; and it would be well for him, if he could long have a peaceable Poſſeſſion of that. His *bodily Preſence* (he himſelf owns) *was weak, and his Speech contemptible*. And I can aſſure him, that would go a great way towards ſpoiling his Fortune. Thoſe that can judge of nothing elſe, can diſtinguiſh an agreeable comely Perſon; and a good jolly Outſide has recommended many a worthleſs Fellow to the Notice and Favour of his Superiors. Nor was this the worſt: But the Temper and Behaviour were (by his own Confeſſion) as forbidding and diſagreeable as his Perſon. He every where deſcribes himſelf with all the Types of a *proud unmannerly Pedant*. In all his Epiſtles he gives himſelf violent Airs of Authority, which he pretended he had received from Heaven, by which he preſumed to ſend People to the D—l for not doing as they

ought to do, and to give them Assurance of Pardon upon their Repentance. At one time he assumes an Equality with the chiefest of the Apostles; at other times he exalts himself above them all, and took upon him to correct one of them that happened to differ with him, with very sharp Language, even to his Face. This *Ill-manners* appeared in his Behaviour to his Betters upon all Occasions, when he stood before *Felix* and *Drusilla*; though he knew his Life was in Danger, he could not forbear throwing out several unmannerly Reflections upon them both, for their Manner of Living; which was no other than has been frequently practised among People of Fashion in those Days, as well as since. The Truth of the Case was this, as it is related by *Josephus* *: *Felix* was much a fine Gentleman, addicted to Gallantry and expensive Pleasures, and by Consequence a little covetous of Money, in order to support them; and being a Man of Spirit and Genius, he was above those superstitious Regards to Conscience, and I know not what, which are usually met with among Men of low Birth and mean Education. *Drusilla* was a Lady of great Beauty and Quality, Sister to King *Agrippa*, and married to *Azizas*, King of the *Emesenians*, who had consented to be circumcised in order to obtain her. But *Felix* happening to see her, fell passionately in love with her, and being a Man of irresistible Address, he never left till he had put her quite out of Conceit with an insipid, formal Tool of a Husband, and persuaded her to surrender up all her Charms to himself; to which the compassionate Lady, in mere Pity to a lan-

* Ant. Lib. 20. *c.* 5.

guishing

guiſhing Lover,—unwillingly conſented. Well! and what of all this! How was the Apoſtle concerned in this Affair? Could not he have pleaded his own Cauſe, and told his own Story, without reflecting upon his *Betters!*—Muſt People of their Diſtinction be accountable to any body for a few Gallantries among themſelves?—He did not indeed directly charge them with the Crimes mentioned. No; he was too cunning for that. It was all by *Inuendo's*, which has always been thought a ſafe way of abuſing one's Betters. What elſe had he to do, to talk about *Righteouſneſs, Temperance, and a Judgment to come!* but ſlily to reproach them with the Want of thoſe Virtues he was recommending, with an *Inuendo* that they would, without Repentance and Amendment, be infallibly damned in the next World, for their Gallantries in this; and that in ſuch rough and uncourtly Language, that frighted the Governor into a Fit of Trembling; and, no doubt, threw the poor Lady into Vapours and Palpitations. Had he or any body elſe took ſuch Liberties in any Congregation in this City, eſpecially at the polite End of the Town, I queſtion whether he would not provoke ſome of the beſt Men in the Pariſh, and deſtroy all his Hopes of Preferment. He was, upon another Occaſion, as ſaucy to the High-Prieſt as he was to the Governor, calling him *whited Wall*, a proverbial Expreſſion for an Hypocrite, and threatening him with God's Judgments for his notorious Partiality and Injuſtice. *God ſhall ſmite thee, thou whited Wall; for ſitteſt thou to judge me according to the Law, and commandeſt me to be ſmitten, contrary to the Law?*—Now can any Man ſay that this was a decent way of treating his Betters? The well-bred

Preachers

Preachers among us are aſhamed of theſe indecent Liberties; they conſider the Quality and Taſte of the Audience, and make uſe of ſuch Topics and ſuch Language as are leaſt apt to give Offence, and moſt likely to gain their Attention. With this a judicious polite Preacher might inſpire the beſt Part of his Audience with an Averſion and Abhorrence of almoſt every Vice, by ſhewing them how deſtructive they are to their Health, their Reputation, or their Fortunes; and recommend every Virtue as a genteel Accompliſhment, and an eſſential Part of good Breeding. Would it not, think you, be a ſufficient Recommendation of the Virtues of Meekneſs, Temperance, and Chaſtity to every ſenſible Lady in *Great-Britain*, to ſhew them how much they contribute to preſerve their Health, their Shapes, and Complexions!—But to talk of *Hell*, *Damnation*, *the Devil*, *Fire and Brimſtone* (Words only fit for the Mouth of an Incendiary or a Highwayman) is indecent and ſhocking to a polite Audience, and enough to throw the moſt brilliant Part of the Congregation into Fits.—So much for his *Ill-manners*, and his Pedantry was equal to it. A *Pedant*, we all know, is *a mere anything: A mere Scholar*, *a mere Soldier*, *a mere Tar*, *a mere Fox-hunter*; one that knows nothing, and can talk of nothing but his own Profeſſion and way of Life.—This particular Abſurdity runs through all his Writings. His Education, his Converſion, his Commiſſion, his Authority, his Faith, his Hope, his Charity, and I know not what, are the great Topics in all his Epiſtles. Nor was this owing to mere Infirmity or Forgetfulneſs; but it appears to have been his fixt Reſolution to perſiſt in it: *I determined* (ſays he) *to know*

know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, *and him crucified.*—Poor Man! if he were to set out among us with this Resolution, and nothing else to recommend him, I could venture to assure him, it would do him but very little Service. *If he understood Quadrille, were a keen Sportsman, a good Bottle-Companion, a notable Manager of an Election, or thoroughly acquainted with the Mysteries of Stocks and Funds*, it would contribute much more to his Credit among the Polite, and his Fortune among the discerning Part of Mankind.

This brings to my Mind a Conversation to which I was a Witness some Years ago, betwixt two learned Divines, upon the Merits of a Book then lately published, to justify the *Resistance of Subjects*, &c. When they had sufficiently puzzled the Cause, and each other, with Arguments taken from the Nature of our Constitution, *Magna Charta*, and the Laws of the Land; the Advocate for Passive Obedience resolved to make short Work with the Controversy, by quoting the 13th Chapter to the *Romans*. Upon which, his Adversary burst into a loud Laugh, and began to triumph without Mercy. I allow you, indeed, said he, that St. *Paul* was a very honest, well-meaning Man, to the best of his Knowledge; but he could not possibly know any thing of the Laws of *England*, being an intire Stranger to our Constitution. This was a decisive Answer, which dumfounded Passive Obedience, and put an End to the Debate, to the great Edification of all the Company.—But to return.

The last general Charge against the inferior Clergy is *Idleness*, and the Neglect of their Cures,—*&c.*—

To

To this Part of the Accusation, I fear, there are too many that must plead guilty. It is often acknowledged and lamented by the best Men and best Friends of their Order; but comes awkwardly and insincerely from the Mouth of an Enemy. The Lazy and the Vicious are their Delight: It is their Pleasure to see a Clergyman live in Defiance of his Duty, and expose himself to the Scorn and Contempt of lewd and riotous Company. They love a Man that will sacrifice his Duty and Conscience to a Merry-meeting; that will be as lewd and profane as the rest of the Company over his Bottle, and even blaspheme for a good Dinner. Such as these are the Disgrace of their Order, and are, for that very Reason, the Friends and Favourites of the Ignorant and Profane. *The honest Doctor*, that will talk lewdly and profanely, and never baulk his Glass, is sure to give no Interruption to the Mirth of the Company; he can never have the Confidence to rebuke the Vices in others, which he encourages by his own Example. Nor is this all.—It is a great Consolation to their Spirits to find the *Parson* as wicked as themselves. The most sanguine Atheist has some Doubts that disquiet him: The merriest Sinner has some uneasy Moments, some Misgivings of Conscience, some Suspicions of Danger, which he knows not how to conquer; but, when he sees *the Reverend Doctor*, (whose Profession is to know, to teach, and to practise better) give into all the shocking Liberties of a wicked Conversation, it gives him a sort of Hope, that he himself does not really believe the Doctrine he preaches to others; and though he may, on a *Sunday*, talk the Language of a Christian Believer; yet it is only for Form's sake, being a necessary Service to se-

cure his Tenure and his Maintenance. And this is the true Reaſon why too many, who, in other reſpects, judge and act like Men of *Senſe* and *Honour* in their Treatment of the Clergy, ſeem to bid Defiance to both. Reaſon and good Senſe direct us to judge of Men and Things by their internal Excellency and Uſefulneſs to Mankind; whatever tends to promote the moſt excellent Ends by the moſt eaſy and agreeable Means, are the moſt eminently eſteemed and valued by Men of Senſe and Underſtanding. Now can any End be more excellent than that which Religion propoſes? Can there be a more valuable Intereſt than the eternal Happineſs of all Mankind? Nay, do not think I am going beyond the Articles of my own Creed. Upon the ſtrongeſt Convictions of ſober Reaſon, I believe there is a God; and that he is a Rewarder of them that endeavour to ſerve and pleaſe him to the beſt of their Knowledge and Power: The ſame unprejudiced Reaſon aſſures me, that the human Soul is immortal; which all the Free-Thinkers of the *Heathen* World believed as well as I: And therefore I conclude, that the Rewards of Virtue and Piety will be eternal in the World to come. Well then, is not everlaſting Happineſs to be preferred to everlaſting Miſery? Is not a quiet Conſcience better than a guilty one? Is it not the higheſt Prudence to ſecure even a probable Reverſion of everlaſting Happineſs, and prevent even a Poſſibility of being miſerable for ever? Theſe are the Ends which even Natural Religion propoſes, of which no Man of common Senſe can entertain a ſerious Doubt. Nor are the Means leſs excellent and reaſonable than the End. The Means are the Exerciſe of every moral Virtue. Now will any Man

Man in his Senſes ſay, that the Practice of every Virture is not more excellent than the Practice of every Vice? Is not the Character of a juſt and upright Man better than that of a Rogue and a Villain? Is not a ſober temperate Man more valuable than a Sot or a Rake? Is it not much more excellent to be merciful, bountiful, and charitable, than to be a covetous, hard-hearted Oppreſſor? Is it not more reaſonable and excellent to ſerve and worſhip God to the beſt of our Knowledge and Power, and do Good to Mankind, than it is neither to fear God, nor regard Man? It is an Affront to common Senſe to make ſo abſurd a Suppoſition as this Queſtion implies: I ſay then, that thoſe, whoſe Buſineſs it is to promote theſe glorious Ends, who labour in it with Integrity, Prudence, and Courage, and live agreeably to their Preaching, deſerve to be conſidered as Friends and Benefactors to Mankind, and the moſt uſeful Supports of civil Government and Order in the World.

It is allowed on all Hands to be a Point of Equity and natural Juſtice to judge impartially of the moral Characters of Men, and to fix Marks of Infamy or Honour in Proportion to their different Degrees of Merit or Demerit, in their different Stations of Life. Now conſider how valuable, to every Man of Senſe and Honour, is the Character of a generous obliging Neighbour, a ſincere Friend, a juſt Servant, and a faithful Steward? Every Man, at firſt hearing, has a ſecret Eſteem and Affection for theſe Characters: And why ſo? but becauſe they act juſtly and honourably in their different Stations of Life. So again, for the ſame Reaſon, every Man of Senſe and Honour eſteems an upright ſkilful Lawyer, a learned careful Phyſi-

cian, a vigilant and active Magiſtrate, an uncorrupt Judge, an honeſt bold Commander by Sea or Land. Is not then a ſincerely good and virtuous Man; is not a ſerious, learned, conſcientious Clergyman, intitled to the ſame Proportion of Eſteem and Honour? Surely he ought to be; and that for the very ſame Reaſon, becauſe he faithfully executes the Truſt committed to him, and acts agreeably to his Character. Conſider again, on the other hand, how deteſtable to every Man of Honour is the treacherous Neighbour, the falſe Friend, the unfaithful Servant, the unjuſt Steward, the corrupt Lawyer, the ignorant or negligent Phyſician, the wicked Judge, the cowardly treacherous Commander, and all for the ſame Reaſon, becauſe they act unworthily and diſagreeably to their Characters, and betray the ſeveral Truſts repoſed in them. And now tell me, is not every wicked immoral Man, particularly every ſcandalous immoral Clergyman, equally deteſtable! Are they not under higher, or at leaſt equal Obligations to act agreeably to their Characters, and faithfully to execute the ſeveral Duties of their Office, to live exemplary and ſober Lives, to encourage the Virtues, and rebuke the Vices, of others; and promote, to the utmoſt of their Power, the Intereſts of Truth and Virtue, the temporal Happineſs and Peace of Mankind, and the Salvation of their Souls hereafter? Surely this is their indiſpenſible Duty. And whoſoever acts otherwiſe, is a Traitor to his Truſt, an Enemy to God and his own Soul. Every Man of Senſe and Honour muſt acknowledge this to be the true State of the Caſe: Yet, in ſpite of this ſtrong Conviction, this undeniable Concluſion, we ſee daily Men who value themſelves

upon their ſuperior good Senſe, and nice Honour, who would think it a Reproach to their Underſtandings to be miſtaken in their Judgments about a Horſe or a Dog; and would bluſh to be told they had not Senſe enough to diſtinguiſh a good one from a bad one, yet have a ſecret Pride and Pleaſure in diſtinguiſhing and careſſing a vicious unworthy Clergyman purely for being ſuch; and deſpiſing and affronting the Virtuous and the Good, purely for doing their Duty, and acting agreeably to their Character and Profeſſion.—Shame and Repentance be the Portion of thoſe who either give or receive this unworthy Preference. But let not the Learned, the Diligent, the Faithful, and the Virtuous ſuffer Reproach for the Vices of their unworthy Brethren, which their Enemies openly approve and encourage, and their beſt Friends condemn and lament, but can neither prevent nor cure.

Thus far we have conſidered the general Charge againſt the whole Body of the Clergy, and what may and ought to be produced in their Defence, though we pretend not to juſtify the intire Conduct of every individual Character. Our Acquaintance among the Clergy (eſpecially of the higher Order) is not ſufficient to enable us to judge, whether there be, as Sir *Harry* boldly affirms upon his own Knowledge, any *immoral*, *ignorant*, *ſneaking Time-ſervers*, &c.—among them. If there be, we give them up, and have nothing to plead in their Behalf. But ſtill, my Friend, let us judge fairly and impartially, and lay the Blame where it ought to be laid. If there be ſuch, they could neither ordain nor prefer themſelves; they, therefore, that ordained or preferred ſuch unworthy Perſons, have the greater Sin. It is a popular Saying,

That the Corruption of the Laity is owing to the Corruption of the Clergy; but impartial Reaſon and daily Experience evinces the contrary, and aſſures us, that the Ignorance, Immorality, and Corruption charged upon the Clergy, are owing to the Ignorance or Iniquity of thoſe Patrons that preferred them. The Patronage of Eccleſiaſtical Benefices is a very ſacred and important Truſt, which ſhould be executed with the greateſt Impartiality, Tenderneſs, and Caution. The Original of which was this: The firſt Founders of the Churches always articled with the Biſhop of the Dioceſe, that they ſhould have the Privilege of preſenting fit Clerks to ſupply their Churches, and receive the Profits of their Endowments, than which nothing could be more reaſonable; for as it was certain that nothing but a devout Senſe of Religion, and a due Regard to the Glory of God, and the Good of Mens Souls, could ever induce Men to diſpoſe of their Eſtates for ſuch pious Uſes; ſo it was as certain, that they would employ none to officiate in thoſe Churches, and have the Care of Souls, but ſuch as they knew to be rightly qualified, and duly diſpoſed to execute ſo ſacred a Commiſſion, and anſwer the pious Intentions of the Founders: Which right is juſtly continued to their Poſterity, and thoſe that have purchaſed from them. And great Pity it is, that the Piety of the firſt Founders had not always deſcended to their Poſterity with their Inheritance, which would have been under Providence) the beſt Security the Church could poſſibly have for a conſtant Succeſſion of worthy Clergymen.

The Patron of a Church, who has the Right of Preſentation to a Cure of Souls, is in the Nature of

a Guardian or Truſtee for thoſe Souls, and has much to anſwer for, if he commit the Care of them to an unworthy Perſon.

The Scriptures,—(nay, don't laugh, for I aſſure you I read them, as the beſt Syſtem of Morality that ever appeared in the World:) The Scriptures, I ſay, deſcribe the Office and Duty of a good Clergy, by a great Variety of ſtrong and ſignificant Metaphors; ſuch as follow,

1. *Lights of the World.* Matt. v. 14 Phil. ii. 15.
2. *Examples to the Flock.* 1 Pet. v. 3.
3. *Good Shepherds.* John x. 14.
4. *Phyſicians of Souls.* Matt. ix. 12.
5. *Watchmen.* Ezek. xxxiii. 7.
6. *Spiritual Guides.* Acts viii. 31. Rom. ii. 19. Heb. xiii. 17.
7. *Ambaſſadors.* 2 Cor. v. 20. Eph. vi. 20.
8. *Stewards of the Myſteries of God.* 1 Cor. iv. 1.

All expreſſing the great End and Deſign of their Office, and the neceſſary Qualifications for it. The Duty and Buſineſs of a Patron is to chooſe ſuch a Perſon to take care of thoſe Souls as may faithfully and conſcientiouſly diſcharge the ſeveral Duties of his Office implied under theſe different Characters. And he who, upon baſe Conſiderations, knowingly commits the Care of Souls to an ignorant and unbelieving, a negligent and immoral wicked Man, betrays the great and ſacred Truſt committed to him, involves himſelf in all the Guilt of his *Clerk*, and will have a ſad Account to give for the Loſs of thoſe Souls that ſhall periſh through his Fault.

Let us take a nearer and closer View of the Folly and Iniquity of such a corrupt Patron, by considering the several Characters of good Clergymen abovementioned, which ought to direct and determine his Choice of proper Persons for that sacred and important Office.

They are, First, *To be the Lights of their Cure*; to enlighten the Darkness, and instruct the Ignorance of those committed to their Charge. They are to shew them the Error of their Ways, and lead them out of Darkness into Light, that they may see the Things that make for their Peace, and be conducted by that Light into the Path of everlasting Life. Now if a corrupt or negligent Patron, instead of setting up a *burning and shining Light*, should take it in his head to prefer an ignorant injudicious Tool to the Cure of a Multitude of Souls, it would be just as wise and equitable a Piece of Conduct, as if the chief Magistrate should command a Rush-light, or a Farthing-Candle, to be set up in every Light-house upon the Coasts of *Great-Britain*, with the gracious Addition of a Brace or two of Glow-worms, for the Improvement of Light, and Security of Navigation.

They are, Secondly, to be *Examples to the Flock*; to be Patterns of their Conduct, that they should learn to act and walk as they see their Teachers do. But to set up a leud Rake, or a profligate Libertine, to be an Example to his Flock, would be just as ridiculous as if a Painter should advise his Scholars to copy *Therſites*, or *Dicky Scarborough*, as Models of an exact Shape, or a *Chimney-ſweeper* for a fine Complexion.

They

They are, Thirdly, to be *good Shepherds*; to feed and defend the Flocks committed to their Charge *, *to ſeek that which was loſt, and bring again that which was driven away; to bind up that which was broken, and to ſtrengthen that which was ſick.* He, therefore, that commits the Care of Souls to a worldly, covetous, negligent, or cruel Man, who ſhall regard nothing but † *to feed himſelf with the Fat, and to cloathe himſelf with the Wool; kill them that are fed, and neglect to feed the reſt*; acts as wiſely and as rationally, as he that ſhould commit the Care of his Flock to the Butcher, or leave them to the Mercy of the Wolf.

They are, Fourthly, *Phyſicians of Souls*; from whom ſo much greater Skill, Experience, Aſſiduity, and Compaſſion is expected, than from the *Phyſicians of our Bodies:* As the former are infinitely more valuable than the latter, their Diſtempers more difficult to be cured, and a Miſcarriage irrecoverably fatal; with this regard a *Patron* may be conſidered as a *Governor to any of our Hoſpitals.* Suppoſe now that the Governors in any of our great Hoſpitals ſhould come to a Reſolution to chooſe neither Phyſician nor Surgeon but of ſuch a particular Size, Complexion, or Family, who, beſides all that, could produce undoubted Teſtimonies that he could, upon proper Occaſions, jump nine times forward and backward over a Stick without boggling; and make no more Difficulty of ſwallowing a Piece of a Mill-ſtone at the Word of Command, than a Piece of a Cuſtard, or a Glaſs of

* Ezek. xxxiv. 16. † 3.

Wine,

Wine, without any Regard at all to their Knowledge and Abilities in their reſpective Profeſſions: To whoſe Account would you charge the many Lives that would infallibly be loſt, for want of able Phyſicians and ſkilful Surgeons to attend the poor Patients!—A Queſtion not fit to be aſked, to which every Fool can give an Anſwer.

They are, Fifthly, *Watchmen*; who, in antient Times, were placed upon Watch-towers, Poſts of Eminence and Elevation, from whence they might have more extenſive Views than the World below them, that they might more eaſily foreſee diſtant Dangers, ſuch as the breaking out of a Fire, or Inundation, or the Invaſion of an Enemy, and give timely Warning to thoſe below, to prevent or flee from the approaching Danger. The Virtues proper for ſuch an Officer were, 1. Vigilance. 2. Attention. 3. Integrity. 4. Courage. If a *Watchman* were to take the Advantage of his exalted Station, where no body could overlook him, to ſleep more ſecurely and comfortably than his Neighbours below him, what would he not deſerve?—Nay, ſuppoſe him to be wide awake, he may happen to be no beter employed than if he were faſt aſleep: He may be paring his Nails, or mending his Stockings, reading the Hiſtory of *Robin Hood*, or *Tom Thumb*, without any Regard to the Nature of his Office, the Welfare of his Neighbours, or the Deſign of his Elevation. Let us, however, ſuppoſe him really attentive to the Duties of his Office, and that he keeps *a ſteady Look-out* on every Side; yet, if he be not an *honeſt Man*, he may be juſt as uſeleſs, though not ſo innocent, as if he

he were faſt aſleep. He may poſſibly ſee an Houſe on fire, and give no Alarm, becauſe he ſees ſome of his Comrades below watching for an Opportunity of Plunder, of which he is ſure to come in for his Share, as the Reward of his Silence. Or ſuppoſe him to be as honeſt as a Man of a little Heart and narrow Soul can poſſibly be, and that he were reſolved to do his Duty, if it could be done with Security to himſelf; yet it may ſo happen, that a juſt Diſcharge of his Duty may expoſe him to the Reſentment of his *Betters*, who would neither want Will nor Power to diſtreſs him, to ſtop his Salary, to remove him from his Poſt, and, perhaps, render him uncapable of ever recovering it again. A Conſideration — that has frighted many an honeſt weak Man out of his Senſes, and made him as uncapable of ſeeing, hearing, or ſpeaking, as if he had been abſolutely born deaf, dumb, and blind. Now let me aſk you,—If you, or any Friend of yours, ſhould have the Misfortune to be ruined by the Negligence, the Treachery, or Cowardice of ſuch a Watchman, what would you not think, what would you not ſay, of him? Could you forbear loading him with Reproach, at leaſt, if not with Curſes?—Which, were I to hear, and be conſcious of to myſelf, that I had been the ſole Author of putting ſuch a worthleſs Fellow into his Employment, I ſhould bluſh to myſelf, and think every Reproach and Curſe diſcharged at his Head, were directly, and deſervedly, levelled at mine. The Caſe, in ſhort, is finely repreſented in the Scripture *: *If, in Time of War, the People of the Land take a Man of*

* Ezek. xxxiii. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

their

their Coaſt, and ſet him for their Watchman: If, when he ſeeth the Sword come upon their Land, he blow the Trumpet, and warn the People; then whoever heareth the Sound of the Trumpet, and taketh not Warning; if the Sword come and take him away, his Blood ſhall be upon his own Head. He heard the Sound of the Trumpet, and took not Warning, his Blood ſhall be upon him; but he that taketh Warning ſhall deliver his own Soul. But if the Watchman ſee the Sword come, and blow not the Trumpet, and the People be not warned, if the Sword come and take away any Perſon from among them, he is taken away in his Iniquity, but his Blood ſhall be required at the Watchman's Hand. And if I had the making of ſuch a Watchman, I ſhould have great Reaſon to fear, that both his Blood and theirs too would finally be required at mine.

They are, Sixthly, *Spiritual Guides.* Now the leaſt that could be expected from a Guide would be, that he ſhould have Eyes to ſee, and Experience to know and chooſe his Way, and Honeſty enough not to miſlead thoſe who were committed to his Direction. If he were abſolutely blind, he would be abſolutely uncapable of doing his Duty; if he had his Eye-ſight, but were utterly a Stranger to the Road, he would be almoſt as uncapable of guiding them, as if he were quite blind; but if he could be ſuppoſed ſo ignorant and ſo wicked as to perſuade himſelf that there was really no ſuch City as that to which they were traveling, and to which he pretended to guide them, and yet would undertake the Office, purely for the ſake of the Reward, he would either lead them at random till he could fairly leave them to ſhift for themſelves,

or

or betray them into the Hands of Banditti and Robbers, who would join with them in the Plunder and Murder of the unhappy Travelers. Could any Puniſhment equal the Guilt of ſuch a treacherous Guide? If the Blind lead the Blind, the Conſequence is obvious and certain; if the Ignorant lead the Ignorant, the Caſe is much the ſame; but if Robbers and Murderers undertake to guide the ignorant and credulous Traveler, nothing but Ruin and Deſtruction can enſue: And the Guilt will certainly reſt upon thoſe who had Authority to compel the poor Travelers to accept of ſuch a Guide as they ſhould appoint, and would refuſe to allow them a better.

They are, Seventhly, *Ambaſſadors*; an Office of great Dignity and Truſt, that requires great Abilities to diſcharge it worthily, to the Honour of his Prince, and the Importance of his Commiſſion. Now if ſuch an Honour were unhappily conferred upon an unworthy Creature, without common Abilities and common Honeſty, judge you what a contemptible, deteſtable Figure he muſt make. See him adorned with all the Enſigns of Honour requiſite to give him Credit and ſupport his Character among Foreigners, a Royal Appointment for his Attendance and his Table, and whatever may contribute to ſupport and adorn his Title and Commiſſion: Should you ſee this poor Wretch, when he comes into the Country to which he is ſent, intirely neglect the Buſineſs of his Employment, flutter about with his Equipage and Attendance, and ſpend his Salary in unworthy Company and Diverſions, what would you think of him? Or ſhould he have Honeſty and Senſe enough to go to Court,

Court, deliver his Credentials, and take upon him the Exercise of his Office; which he had not Ability, or Integrity enough, to execute: Should he, through Ignorance or Cowardice, so far prostitute the Dignity of his Character, as to dishonour his Prince, and sacrifice the real Interest of his Country; what Contempt, what Punishment would he not deserve? —— But should he be yet more wicked, and excuse his Negligence to his intimate Friends and Bottle-Companions, by assuring them, That all this Solemnity of Title and Figure were nothing but grave Farce and Banter; that he had really no such Master, nor had received any such Commission, but was only acting a gainful Part for the Interest, and by the Direction of wiser Heads than his own, for certain political Purposes, which were not proper for him to own.—— A Supposition so monstrous can only be exceeded by the Wickedness and Folly of an impious, unbelieving Clergyman, who pretends a Commission from God, whom in his Heart he denies, and disbelieves that whole Revelation, which the Devils believe and tremble at.

They are, lastly, *Stewards of the Mysteries of God.* And we know that it is required of all Stewards, that they be skilful and faithful in the Discharge of their Office. Let not the Word *Mysteries* move your Spleen. Whatever you and I may think of it, it is, however, a good Argument, *ad hominem.* For surely it ought, in common Justice, to be presumed, that every Christian Clergyman believes them; or if he does not, that he would have Honour enough fairly to own it, to quit his Preferment and disclaim his Character,

Character, and deal as honeſtly with the World as you and I do. By this Deſignation of their Office, they are obliged to ſtudy, and be able and ready to defend theſe ſacred Myſteries (as they ſuppoſe them) againſt all Oppoſers. They are to convince the ſober and rational Inquirer, of the Ground and Neceſſity of this Belief, and the neceſſary Connection there is betwixt orthodox Faith, unprejudiced Reaſon, and ſound Morality, in promoting all the Purpoſes of true Religion here, and everlaſting Happineſs hereafter. Now, if an unbelieving Patron were to diſpoſe of a good Benefice, he would undoubtedly beſtow it upon one of his own Way of Thinking, who believed as little of theſe myſterious Articles as himſelf. Well! how (think you?) would ſuch a Man behave in the Care of his Flock? To be ſure, he would never take Pains to preach ſuch Doctrines, or preſs the Neceſſity of ſuch Articles as he did not believe himſelf. He might be too politic, perhaps, directly to deny or oppoſe them; for Negatives are untractable Things; and till the Boundaries and Fences of Orthodoxy be abſolutely deſtroyed, and Chriſtianity ceaſe to be the Religion of the State, there might be ſome Appearance of Danger; becauſe the Creeds and Liturgy of the Church are made by Act of Parliament, Part of the Law of the Land: His Buſineſs therefore would be either never to trouble himſelf or his Hearers about ſuch intricate Points; or if he did, to mention them with a philoſophical Indifference, as Matters of doubtful Diſputation, and to lay all the Streſs of their Duty upon thoſe plain and obvious Duties of Morality; upon which, the Sober and the Learned, in all Ages and all Nations, have been

agreed,

agreed, That an upright, ſober, polite Morality is abſolutely neceſſary to make us acceptable to God and Man.—But if, after all, it ſhould appear (perhaps too late) that the *Myſteries* of Revealed Religion ſtand upon an eternal, unſhaken Foundation; that without ſuch a Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God; that the reverent Uſe of the two Sacraments, which depend abſolutely upon that Faith, is neceſſary to Salvation; which has been ſtrongly and rationally debated by Men of great Learning and fine Underſtanding; to whom, I muſt confeſs, I have never yet ſeen a ſatisfactory Anſwer: If, I ſay, this ſhould at laſt prove to be the Caſe, how ſad will the Condition of thoſe Men be, who have had ſuch a Teacher; and what a faithleſs *Steward of the Myſteries of God* will he be found, who has all along diſowned his having any ſuch Things committed to his Charge? And how far the Patron will be involved in the ſame Guilt, I leave them to judge.

Let us now conſider the preſent State of Patronage; eſpecially in this Part of our Iſland, which is under Epiſcopal Government.

The great Patrons of all Eccleſiaſtical Dignities, are,

1. The King.
2. The Lord High Chancellor.
3. The Archbiſhops and Biſhops.

1. The King is the ſole Fountain of Honour and Dignity, in all Caſes, and to all Perſons, as well Eccleſiaſtical

Eccleſiaſtical as Civil. For the Lord Chancellor, and their Lordſhips the Biſhops, being made ſolely by the King, may be conſidered only as the King's Agents, or Deputies in Eccleſiaſtical Promotions; they being as ſo many Pipes and Channels to convey the Royal Favour to thoſe, who are too far removed from the Royal Preſence, to receive any immediate Comfort or Bleſſing from it; and who will be ſure never to beſtow it, but on thoſe whom they know to be worthy. In this Reſpect, *happy, thrice happy* is the Church of *England*, under the Patronage and Protection of a *moſt Religious and Gracious King*; whoſe moſt illuſtrious Title is that of *ſupreme Governor of the Church*, and *Defender of the Faith*; and who, conſidered under either of theſe Characters, neither will, nor can do, any thing to the Prejudice of the eſtabliſhed Church. He cannot be inſenſible, that that would be not only acting in Contradiction to his Character, as Head of the Church and Defender of the Faith, and to all the Engagements of his Coronation-Oath; but ſapping his own Authority, and deſtroying the beſt and trueſt Support of his Authority and Government. I mean *Conſcience and a juſt Senſe of Religion.* Now that can only be ſupported among the People, by the Influence and Example of their ſpiritual Guides. When they ſee them living and acting, as well as talking like Chriſtians; when they ſhall ſee them zealous of good Works, jealous for the Glory of God, and Intereſts of true Religion; not influenced by ſecular Views of worldly Intereſt or Power; but deſpiſing and oppoſing every Temptation that may be thrown in their Way, to deſert or betray the Truſt committed to their Charge:

Such as theſe will ſhine as *Lights in the World*; the People that ſee them will reverence and eſteem them, will gladly ſubmit to their Directions, and follow their Examples, and acknowledge that God is in them of a Truth, when they ſee them live agreeably to their Characters, and believe and practiſe themſelves what they preach to others. But if a Prince ſhould ever be ſo unhappy as to promote a Set of covetous, ambitious, time-ſerving Seekers, only to be the Tools of Power; the Influence of ſuch Examples on the Minds of the People, muſt be prodigiouſly evil, and the Credit of Religion muſt ſink to the ſame Level with the Credit of its Teachers. Experience, therefore, has ſhewn, that it has never been good Policy, eſpecially in *England*, to reduce the Credit of the Clergy; and by conſequence of Religion, too low in the Opinion of the People. Certain it is, no Laws can be framed, no human Authority can be ſufficient to reſtrain ambitious, turbulent, and ſeditious Spirits. There is no Security like Conſcience. When People are convinced that Rebellion and Reſiſtance of the ſupreme Power is a damnable Sin, they will then be ſubject not only for Wrath, but alſo for Conſcience ſake; which the Clergy cannot inculcate with any Hopes of Succeſs, further than their Credit with the Laity can engage their Attention and Regard. But if ever they ſhould ſee the higheſt Dignities of the Church, conferred as a Reward for the moſt obſequious Compliances with the Court, it will naturally weaken and abate that Reverence that is due to their Eccleſiaſtical Superiors, they will be tempted to imagine, that every thing they ſay to them is the Language of the Court, rather than either Law or Go-

ſpel; and therefore pay no more Regard to it, than they do to the Charge of a Judge at the Aſſizes, who has received his Inſtructions beforehand from the Court; and is particularly directed what to tell the Country. This inſenſibly draws the freethinking and unthinking Majority into a Diſeſteem and Suſpicion of the Truth of Religion in general; whoſe Foundation they can never think to be divine, when they ſee it intirely played as an Engine of State, and directed by the moſt corrupt Maxims of State-Policy. Hence they are perſuaded by Atheiſts and Deiſts to reſolve all into Prieſtcraft, directed by a ſuperior State-Craft. This gives the full Reins to all Lewdneſs, Immorality, and Rebellion, where there is the leaſt Proſpect of Succeſs or Impunity. But even here, the State will find themſelves much miſtaken in their Politics; and that all their Schemes of Security from ſuch a State of Things will end in Diſappointment and Confuſion. For, if Religion were a State-Craft, it would anſwer no political Purpoſes, unleſs the People were taught to believe the direct contrary, that the whole was a *Divine Inſtitution*; and that the Clergy acted by virtue of a *Divine Commiſſion*, which they never will, nor can believe, whilſt they ſee the Governors of the Church exerciſing almoſt no Eccleſiaſtical Power, but in Dependence and by Direction of the State. No ſenſible Man will call any thing *Religion*, but what he thinks to be *divine*; that is, commanded immediately by God: And that whatſoever is ſo, is wholly independent and unalterable by any human Power whatſoever. And, to ſay the plain Truth, this is it which has made ſo many Deiſts among the Gentry, and ſo many Diſſenters

among the common People of *England.* The Diſſenters, one and all, pretend to divine Commiſſion, independent of all the Powers upon Earth; therefore the common People flock to them, and look upon the Church of *England* as a State-Religion, or a parliamentary Eſtabliſhment. And the *Deiſts*, whilſt they obſerve the Conduct of their Superiors, and the political Direction and Reſtraints of Eccleſiaſtical Power and Diſcipline, if they ſhould ever find themſelves ſitting in *Committees of Religion*, they can never think there is any Thing more divine in a controverted Point of Religion, than in a controverted Election; ſince both are to be determined by the Votes of the Majority. Upon theſe Conſiderations we are morally certain, that a wiſe and religious Prince will never do any thing to the Prejudice and Diſcredit of Religion, and by conſequence will never fill the higheſt Offices of the Church with Men of ſuch Inability or ill Principles, as may diſgrace their Order, and make Religion itſelf contemptible.

But ſhould we, or our Poſterity, be ever ſo unhappy as to ſee a Papiſt, a Preſbyterian, an Heretic, or an Infidel, on the Throne of theſe Kingdoms; which God forbid! But it is, by no means, an impoſſible Suppoſition, for what has been may be; and no human Prudence can foreſee or prevent ſuch a dreadful Contingency: In ſuch a Caſe there is no Doubt to be made, but each would prefer Men of their own Principles and Complexions; Men that would ſerve their Luſts, and gratify their Ambition; or at leaſt ſuch as would comply with every thing, and not dare to reprove their Faults, or tell them

their Duty. By this means it would be in the Power of the vileſt Favourites and Inſtruments in Iniquity, to ſell the beſt Preferments in the Church to the beſt Bidder; though he had no other Kind of Merit, but that of giving a valuable Conſideration. This muſt neceſſarily tend to make Religion appear to the undiſcerning, the illiterate, and injudicious, which are much the greater Part of Mankind, to be not only an empty Name, but a Cheat and Impoſition upon Mankind, when they ſee it ſo proſtituted to the vileſt Purpoſes of Lewdneſs, Ambition, and Covetouſneſs.

There is one Difficulty yet behind: It may ſo happen that a well-diſpoſed Prince, of a moſt gracious Diſpoſition, and upright Intention, may yet be betrayed through an exceſſive Eaſineſs and Credulity, into an improper and unhappy Choice of Miniſters, both in Church and State. A Prince that is reſolved to ſee with his own Eyes, and hear with his own Ears, cannot eaſily be deceived in the Choice of proper Perſons to fill the higheſt Stations in both. But if, through Diffidence or Indolence, he delegates his whole Authority to a favourite Miniſter, and reſigns himſelf abſolutely to his Direction, he thereby makes him not only his *Premier* in Temporals, but his *Vicegerent* in Spirituals, with Conſequences no leſs dangerous to his own Royal Perſon and Authority, than to the Intereſt and Security of Church and State. In a Nation divided into Factions and Parties, which is too often the Caſe of all Nations, more or leſs, there will be perpetual Struggles for Power and Eſtabliſhment; and out of whichever Party the Miniſter is choſen, he will naturally con-

ſider himſelf as the Head and Repreſentative of that Party, whom he muſt ſupport and ſtrengthen, that they may be able to ſupport him; which can only be done by Power, and keeping up a good Majority in both Houſes of Parliament. And as the Biſhops are known to have great Weight in the Upper Houſe, it is natural for him to prefer none but ſuch as give him full Security for their intire Attachment to his Perſon and Intereſt. If, in full Confidence of his Integrity, upright Intentions, and public Spirit, he ſhould determine to prefer none but Men of diſtinguiſhed Learning, Piety, and Courage, he need never be at a loſs to find out proper Perſons ſo qualified: But if he want a Set of *Thoroughers* (as Sir *Humphrey Polefworth*, of immortal Memory, uſed to call them), ſuch are always to be found in the Purlieus of a Court, waiting for Vacancies, and ready to accept them upon the Terms of their Patron. The Conſequence of this muſt quickly be, a Contempt of public Spirit and political Virtue, of good Learning, ſound Morals, and true Religion, as Things of no Uſe or Conſideration towards procuring Preferment, which they ſee ſolely beſtowed upon political Conſiderations. The Principles of the Miniſter and his Party are digeſted into a Kind of *political Creed*; which is as abſolutely neceſſary for obtaining Preferment, as the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith are for obtaining Salvation. I remember I once ſaw the Form of ſuch a Creed, drawn up in a late Reign, by a very merry Writer, to this Effect: *I believe my Lord* * * * *to be the beſt and wiſeſt Man in* England, *the King only excepted; that all he ſays is true, and all he does is juſt and right;*

and

and whoever thinks otherwiſe, is either a Knave or a Fool, an Enemy to his Country and his own Intereſt, and deſerves never to be admitted to any Office or Truſt, Eccleſiaſtical, Military, or Civil, from this Time forth for evermore. Amen. Very conciſe;—— but very comprehenſive; including every thing that is neceſſary to be believed by any Man that intends to riſe by the Intereſt of a Party. I would not be thought to mean any particular Miniſter or Party. Parties conſidered as Parties are all alike: They differ only as a *Black Bull* may do from a *White one* in Size, and Strength, and Colour. The ſtrongeſt is always in the Right, and the weakeſt always in the Wrong. The firſt reſolved, at all Adventures, to ſupport itſelf; the other watching all Advantages to perplex their Counſels, to diſtreſs their Adminiſtration, and ſet their whole Conduct in the moſt odious Lights, in Hopes of procuring a Change, and getting the Reins into their own Hands. Upon the whole, we may venture to pronounce, that a wiſe and good Prince will never knowingly prefer an unworthy Man to any of thoſe eminent Stations in the Church; and that a weak or irreligious Prince, or cunning Miniſter, will never but by Chance prefer a good one. A projecting Head, a voluble Tongue, and a ſupple Conſcience, will be a more ſucceſsful Recommendation than the Knowledge of an Angel, the Piety of a Saint, or the Courage of a Martyr.

The next great Lay-Patron is the Lord High Chancellor, who has a Right of preſenting to every Benefice belonging to the Crown, under the Value of

20 *l. per ann.* in the King's Books. The Reaſon of this is generally ſaid to be, that he had formerly ſeveral Clergymen conſtantly attending him in the Execution of his Office, who were a Sort of Aſſeſſors or Aſſiſtants upon ſome particular Occaſions, as particularly in Cauſes of a religious Nature; where, as *Keeper of the King's Conſcience*, he was to determine, rather by the Laws of God and Revealed Religion, or Canon Law, (which, at that time, was eſteemed a neceſſary Branch of Learning for every Clergyman) rather than by the Forms of Civil or Common Law. On which Account, it has been generally thought, the Kings of *England* formerly uſed to prefer ſome Biſhop of eminent Sanctity and Learning to that high Office. Theſe Clergymen always attended the Lord Chancellor, as thoſe now do, who are called *Clerks in Chancery*, and who were not permitted to marry, till a Statute was made on Purpoſe to enable them, in the Reign of *Henry* VIII. And that the Lord Chancellor might be enabled to gratify theſe Clerks, he had the Privilege of beſtowing thoſe Benefices given him by the Crown. And a very great Privilege it is, as he preſents not only to ſeveral very valuable parochial Cures, but to ſeveral Dignities in Cathedral Churches, as *Rocheſter*, *Glouceſter*, *Briſtol*, &c. which Preferments, as they were intended to be the diſtinguiſhing Rewards of diſtinguiſhed Merit, were certainly never lodged in better Hands than they are at preſent. If univerſal Knowledge, conſummate Prudence and Experience, and unaffected Piety and Zeal for Religion, can give us any Security, we are morally certain that his Lordſhip can never prefer an ill Man, nor diſ-

countenance

countenance a good one. I have been credibly informed, that when the *Lord Chancellor* FINCH was firſt promoted to the *Seals*, he uſed often to ſay, That the Patronage of Eccleſiaſtical Preferments was the greateſt Burden annexed to his Office; and that after many ſerious and pious Reflections upon it, he one Day addreſſed himſelf to his Chaplain, Dr. *Sharp*, afterwards Lord Archbiſhop of *York*, (whom he loved and truſted as a Friend, and honoured as his Confeſſor and ſpiritual Guide) to this Effect: *The greateſt Difficulty, I apprehend, in the Execution of my Office, is the Patronage of Eccleſiaſtical Preferments. God is my Witneſs, that I would not knowingly prefer an unworthy Perſon; but as my Courſe of Life and Studies has lain another way, I cannot think myſelf ſo good a Judge of the Merits of ſuch Suitors as you are; I therefore charge it upon your Conſcience, as you will anſwer it to Almighty God, that upon every ſuch Occaſion, you make the beſt Inquiry, and give me the beſt Advice you can, that I may never beſtow any Favour upon an undeſerving Man; which if you neglect to do, the Guilt will be intirely yours, and I ſhall deliver my own Soul.*

The next great Patrons are the moſt Reverend the Archbiſhops and Biſhops. And methinks there is at firſt Sight ſuch an apparent Congruity betwixt Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction and Patronage, that I am often tempted to wiſh, they had more Intereſt and Power in this reſpect, than at preſent they ſeem to have; that they had as much Power in the Government of the Church, as the Lords Commiſſioners of the Admiralty, and the Commiſſioners of Trade and Plantations have in their reſpective Provinces: Or, which is yet

yet more to the Purpoſe and comes nearer to the Caſe, as much as the ſeveral great Companies of this City enjoy by virtue of their reſpective Charters: At leaſt, that they had as much under Chriſtian Kings, as they enjoyed under heathen Emperors. Every thing that is venerable and ſacred is implied in the Office and Character of a Biſhop: Their Education, Courſe of Studies and Employment, ſhould make them better Judges of the Merit and Qualifications of Clergymen, than Lay-Patrons can generally be ſuppoſed to be. Which gives us the higheſt Security, that the Power of electing proper Perſons to ſupply the ſeveral Vacancies in their own Epiſcopal Colleges, and providing for the Neceſſities of the Church upon all emergent Occaſions, can never be depoſited in ſafer Hands than their own. You cannot but remember, when I juſt mentioned this in the Company, Sir *Harry* loſt all Patience, and affirmed that they made as many unworthy Promotions as any Lay-man of them all. He declared upon his own Knowledge, that one of them had preferred three ſuch good-for-nothing Fellows in one Neighbourhood, that a Man of Probity and Character would be aſhamed to be ſeen in their Company. If the Fact be true, for which we have no other Evidence but the Word and Honour of a very angry Man; this is a ſtrong Argument on my Side of the Queſtion, and charges the whole Guilt imputed to the Biſhop upon thoſe who preferred ſuch an unworthy Perſon to the Epiſcopal Dignity: Had the filling that vacant See been left to the reſt of the Comprovincials, according to the moſt primitive Uſage, I dare ſay they would have ſhewn ſo much Regard to the Good of the Church, the Intereſt of Religion, the Dignity of

their

their Office, and the Credit of their Order, as to provide a more proper Perſon than (it ſeems by this Account) has been provided for them.

But the greateſt Part of the parochial Cures are in the Gift of the two Univerſities, the Nobility, and Gentry of the Kingdom. The Univerſities are under ſuch Regulations that they are ſeldom or never known to prefer an unworthy Perſon, and it is a foul Reproach upon the Nobility and Gentry of *England* to ſuppoſe them ſo deſtitute of Honour and Conſcience, as to abuſe ſo ſacred a Truſt, as is that of Eccleſiaſtical Patronage, by preferring ſuch Numbers of unworthy Clergymen as the Enemies of their Order would ſeem to inſinuate. From whence we humbly preſume, that the Charge is falſe, and cannot be ſupported; not that we pretend to ſay, there is no Ground at all for the Accuſation; in ſuch a numerous Body as the Clergy of *England*, there are, no doubt, too many irregular, undeſerving Members; and conſidering the preſent State of Things, it is morally impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe. The many indirect Influences to which they ſtand expoſed; the poor Endowments of too many parochial Cures, and the preſent, general, and unavoidable Relaxation of Church-Diſcipline, cannot fail to produce ſeveral Irregularities, which the wiſeſt and beſt of their Order condemn and lament, but can neither prevent nor cure.

Well! (ſay you) what then muſt be done? Good faith (my Friend) you aſk me a very hard Queſtion; I cannot tell what *muſt be done*. But I can tell what *may be done*; and what perhaps in Conſcience and good

good Policy *ought to be done.*——*Date Cæsari, quæ Cæsaris sunt; Deo, quæ sunt Dei.* What should hinder the restoring the Government and Discipline of the Church to its primitive Institution? What possible Danger can there be in restoring to the Episcopal College, who are the Governors and Representatives of the Church, those original, inherent Rights and Immunities, which are essential to her as a Society, and which every incorporate Body of Men claim as essential to their very Being, and absolutely necessary for their Preservation. I mean the Power of *electing their own Governors* and enacting Laws for the better Government of its Members; so that they be not inconsistent with the Laws of the Land. I am sanguine enough to imagine, that the State would find their Account in it, upon a political View, as well as the Church, if there were no other Reason to persuade or hope for such a Change. On which Account, I have often wondered that so many learned and religious Prelates, who have so near Access to the Throne, have so long neglected to represent this Grievance, in the most dutiful and affecting Manner, to those who have it in their Power to redress it, and who cannot be supposed to want Inclination to do what Religion, Justice, Policy, and Interest recommend to their Attention and Regard.

In order to set this Matter in a clearer Light, let us look back to the original Institution of the Church, as a Society intirely distinct from the Civil Government, and in the Exercise of its spiritual Powers wholly independent upon it. In the Beginning of this Letter I proposed to take no notice of the Pretensions of the Clergy to a Divine Establishment, antecedent

to

to any human Charters or Conſtitutions. But as it is beyond Diſpute, that the Church has been from the Beginning in Poſſeſſion of ſuch a Claim, which they profeſs themſelves ready to make good againſt all Oppoſers; ſo it is amply recognized by the Law of the Land; of which our Liturgy, Canons, and Book of Homilies are a Part, in which the independent Power of the Church (in Matters purely ſpiritual) is fully and plainly acknowledged. It will be neceſſary to look back to that original Charter, by which theſe divine and ſpiritual Powers have been conveyed to them.——————I ſee you begin to look arch upon my ſerious Apology for ſpiritual Power; but conſider I ſpeak the Language of my Clients, as any unbelieving Counſel would do, if he were retained by a good Fee to plead on this Side of the Queſtion. And if it be thought no Abſurdity for the greateſt Infidel to ſwear upon the four Goſpels, in Confirmation of the Evidence he ſhall give upon any Matter in queſtion, before a Court of Judicature; I hope it will not be thought unreaſonable in us to inſiſt upon their Authority, and appeal to them as authentic Records and proper Evidence in the Caſe before us; which will directly admit of no other, however it may be corroborated by the concurrent Teſtimonies and uniform Practice of the Church even from the apoſtolical Times.

The Goſpels then poſitively and plainly aſſert, That there is A GOVERNMENT in the Church, and ONE SUPREME GOVERNOR, even JESUS CHRIST; whom all that profeſs to believe in him acknowledge to be the

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SUPREME LORD*, *who died for us all, that they which live ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him that died for them, and roſe again.* The *Church* therefore † *which he hath purchaſed by his Blood*, is hereby made ſubject unto him; and he is the Head or chief Ruler of it. ‡ *The Lord hath given unto him the Throne of his Father* David; *he ſhall reign over the Houſe of* Jacob *for ever*; *and of his Kingdom there ſhall be no End.* ‖ *God hath put all Things under his Feet, and given him to be the HEAD over all Things to the Church.* § *All Power is given to him both in Heaven and Earth.* This Power, before his Aſcenſion into Heaven, he delegated to certain Perſons, whom he ſent into the World, with the ſame extenſive Commiſſion which he himſelf had received from his Father. ** *As my Father ſent me, even ſo ſend I you.* This Authority and Commiſſion the Apoſtle *Paul* frequently inſiſts upon in his Epiſtles: And calls it the Authority †† *which the Lord had given him*, and the reſt of the Apoſtles. So he tells the *Corinthians*, that they were not to account of him and the other Paſtors of the Church as their Miniſters or Servants, but ‡‡ *as the Miniſters of God, and Stewards of the Myſteries of Chriſt.* And declares that both he and they were ‖‖ *Ambaſſadors for Chriſt*; intimating that they had received a full and ample Commiſſion immediately from the Fountain of all Power, *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, in the ſame Extent and to the ſame Purpoſes that he himſelf had received it

* 2 Cor. v. 15. † Acts xx. 28. ‡ Luke i. 32, 33.
‖ Eph. i. 22. § Matt. xxviii. 18. ** John xx. 21.
†† 2 Cor. x. 8. ‡‡ 1 Cor. iv. 1. ‖‖ 2 Cor. v. 20.

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from the Father. This divine Commiſſion, by which they repreſented the Perſon of their Maſter, intitled them to a great Degree of Reſpect and Obedience from their ſpiritual Subjects and Inferiors. On which Account the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* commands them * *to obey them that had the Rule over them, and ſubmit themſelves.* And that the Obedience required in this Place is not meant to temporal but ſpiritual Governors, is evident from the following Words: * *For they watch for your Souls, as they that muſt give Account.* By virtue of this divine Commiſſion, they collected, ſettled, and governed the ſeveral Churches, which, by their Preaching and Miracles, they had converted to the Faith; and for three hundred Years together, vigorouſly and gloriouſly ſupported the Apoſtolical Authority, where the civil Government was ſo far from lending the leaſt Aſſiſtance or Protection, that they employed all their Rage and Power to perſecute and ſuppreſs it. And though they were perfectly obedient in civil Matters to the temporal Powers, to whom they preached up Obedience in all Things lawful, under the Penalty of Damnation; yet when they were oppoſed by the Rulers in the Execution of their Office, and forbid to preach the Goſpel to the People, they did by no means think themſelves bound to obey, becauſe they wiſely judged † *it to be more right to hearken to God, rather than to Man.* Therefore, notwithſtanding all the Oppoſition they met with, and all the Perſecution they ſuffered, from the temporal Powers, in the Execution of their Commiſſion; they ceaſed not to exerciſe the Autho-

* Heb. xiii. 17. † Acts iv. 19.

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rity committed to them by Chriſt, and to fulfil the Will of him that ſent them. They preached the Goſpel; they gathered and ſettled Churches among the People, whom by their Preaching they had converted, performing all the Duties and Functions of Eccleſiaſtical Governors. And God himſelf teſtified his Approbation of their Proceedings in this Affair, by the wonderful Gifts and Graces he beſtowed upon them, and the miraculous Works he enabled them to perform. The Church therefore, and the Governors of it, depend immediately upon Chriſt, receiving all their Power and Authority from him only.

The FIRST BISHOP in the Chriſtian Church was JESUS CHRIST himſelf; called therefore by *Peter* * *the Shepherd and* BISHOP *of our Souls.* His twelve Apoſtles were his Preſbyters, his ſeventy Diſciples were as it were his Deacons. Whilſt he lived upon Earth, he governed his Church in his Perſon; his Apoſtles had Authority to preach and baptize, and to pronounce Remiſſion of Sins, which is the Prieſt's Office now; yet could they not perform that Office, peculiarly Epiſcopal, of giving others a Commiſſion to act with Authority in the Government and Direction of the Church. But when Chriſt was riſen from the Dead, and ready to aſcend into Heaven, then he enlarged the apoſtolical Power, and gave them Authority to collect and ſettle Churches; and give Commiſſion to others, as he himſelf had given to them. † *As my Father hath ſent me, even ſo ſend I you.* ‡ *And when he had ſaid this,*

* 1 Pet. ii. 25. † John xx. 21. ‡ John xx. 22.

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he breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Signifying to them, by this Emblem of breathing on them, that they should, in a short time, be * *baptized with the Holy Ghost, and be endued with Power from above after that the Holy Ghost was come upon them.* And therefore when they had received the Holy Ghost upon the Day of *Penticost*, they began to collect and settle the Church, and govern it by those Rules which they had received from their Masters and Founder. The Apostles had hereby an additional Power to their first Commission. Their Master had sent them out to preach and to baptize in his own Life-time; but now he sends them, even as he himself had been sent by the Father. It is certain they could not be sent as Mediators and Redeemers as he was. † *For there is but one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus.* This new Commission, therefore, must be understood only of the Authority of Government, Jurisdiction, and Discipline in the Church, which Christ himself had received of the Father; and of ordaining others to the same Office, by virtue of their first Ordination. Whilst Christ continued with them in the Flesh, they had a Commission to preach the Gospel; but by this last, when they were to supply the Place of their absent Master, they themselves also communicated to others, that Episcopal Authority which themselves had received from the *Chief Bishop*, that there might be a continual uninterrupted Succession of Ecclesiastical Governors to the End of the World. At the granting of which Commission, their Master gave them a solemn Pro-

* Acts i. 5, 8. † 1 Tim. ii. 5.

miſe of his ſpecial Bleſſing, Protection, and Aſſiſtance for the due Diſcharge and Execution of it through all Ages of the World, * *And lo I am with you always to the End of the World*; which as it could not be meant of his bodily Preſence, who was then about to be taken up into Heaven, muſt neceſſarily be underſtood of his ſpiritual Preſence, Authority, and Protection over thoſe, who ſhould from thenceforth duly receive and worthily execute this divine Commiſſion to the End of the World.

Pardon me, I ſee you begin to yawn at this ſolemn Account of Spiritual Power and Eccleſiaſtical Authority; but we cannot help it; it is neceſſary to clear the Foundation of our Claim, which can no otherwiſe be done than by appealing to our Charter, which, however it has been diſputed, bantered, and ridiculed by the Enemies of the Clergy, ſtill ſubſiſts without Corruption or Mutilation; it is in every body's Hands, and by good Fortune has from time to time been acknowledged as an authentic Record by the Laws of the Land. It may perhaps appear but a dry Story to an unconcerned By-ſtander. But to us, who are Parties deeply intereſted in the Iſſue of this Affair, it appears in a very different Light; and what may ſeem to be wanting in fine Thoughts and elegant Language, is abundantly made up to us by ſtrong and unqueſtionable Evidence on our Side of the Queſtion. The Examination of Charters and old Records has nothing very entertaining to a Man of a lively Fancy and fine Imagination like your own; but it gives a noble and rational Pleaſure to the Counſel, as well as to the

* Matth. xxviii. 20.

Client,

Client, when they find there any thing that may determine a Diſpute, by ſecuring a Right or Property in Poſſeſſion, or recovering a loſt one. A Man in ſound Health, high Spirits, and an eaſy Fortune, would find but little Entertainment in reading one of *Freind*'s or *Ratcliffe*'s Preſcriptions, or peruſing a long Bill in Chancery; but a Man under a decaying Conſtitution, a diſputed Title, and an empty Pocket, would find more Beauties in the Preſcription of an able Phyſician, the Opinion of a ſkilful Lawyer, or a Bank-bill of 1000*l.* than in 10000 the fineſt Lines that could be found in *Homer* or *Virgil*.—This by the bye—

Here then you ſee the Plan of a Divine Charter, a ſpiritual Commiſſion conveying ſuch Privileges, guarded by ſuch Immunities and Sanctions, as all the Powers upon Earth can neither give, nor alter, nor take away; a Commiſſion not confined to this World, not limited to any particular Period of Time, but extended even to the next World, and the Intereſts of Eternity, intirely diſtinct from every Branch of civil and temporal Authority, and independent of it.—Miſtake me not, I neither ſay nor mean that the Clergy, as Delegates and Deputies under Chriſt, and Governors of his Church, are exempt from the Power of temporal Princes, and the Juriſdiction of ſecular Authority. By no means!—As Subjects, they owe the ſame Obedience to the civil Power that all other Subjects do, and under the ſame Penalty of Damnation if they reſiſt; for the Power of the Church is merely ſpiritual. Chriſt himſelf would never exerciſe any temporal Authority, neither gave he any ſuch to his Apoſtles, or their Succeſſors; but the Power

which he himſelf exerciſed upon Earth, and at his Aſſenſion into Heaven, gave to his Apoſtles, and their Succeſſors, was ſuch a Power as the civil Magiſtrate never had, and which could make no Encroachment on the temporal Prerogative. The temporal Power extends only to the Bodies and Goods of the Subjects; but the ſpiritual affects neither of theſe, but the Soul only. The Power then of the Church and the State are intirely different from each other upon all Accounts: The firſt is purely ſpiritual, and exerciſed only in ſpiritual Matters, which are no Part of the civil Magiſtrate's Office, ſuch as preaching the Word of God, adminiſtering the Sacraments to ſuch as are worthy, and ſuſpending and depriving of Communion the obſtinately impenitent, abſolving penitent Sinners, and ordaining proper Perſons for the Execution of thoſe ſpiritual Acts of Juriſdiction. But the civil Magiſtrate acts in a quite different Sphere, and in a quite different Manner. He uſes the Sword, and puniſhes the Breach of temporal Laws with temporal Penalties, ſuch as Fines, Confiſcations, Impriſonment, Baniſhment, and Death. He may juſtly puniſh even penitent Sinners, whom the Church, upon their true Repentance, has abſolved from ſpiritual Cenſures; and he may remit the temporal Puniſhments due to impenitent Offenders, whilſt they lie under the juſt Cenſure of their ſpiritual Superiors. The civil as well as ſpiritual Superiors may puniſh for the ſame Offences, but not in the ſame Way: The former inflict temporal Puniſhments, the other ſpiritual: The former have the Power of the Sword, the latter of the Keys. In a Word, theſe two Powers are co-ordinate, perfectly diſtinct, and may very well ſubſiſt the one without

out the other. There have been, in all Ages, States and Kingdoms wiſely governed, where there was no ſpiritual Power, nor Society at all; and it is well known that the Chriſtian Church, for full three hundred Years together, ſtood and proſpered in the full Exerciſe of her whole Eccleſiaſtical Authority, under the moſt violent Oppoſition, and cruel Perſecutions from the civil Power.

But you will ſay, perhaps, this is an indirect Way of denying or queſtioning the King's Supremacy, which both the Scriptures and the Laws of the Land have declared, and which all Eccleſiaſtical Perſons are bound ſolemnly to recognize, and acknowledge him to be *in all Cauſes, and over all Perſons, as well Eccleſiaſtical as Civil, in all his Dominions and Countries ſupreme.*—By no means. We confeſs and acknowledge, that all Perſons, of what Rank or Condition, State or Quality ſoever, are ſubject to the temporal Government under which they live; and that the Clergy owe the ſame Allegiance to the ſupreme Power under whoſe Protection they live, as the Laity do. The Apoſtle's Command is general and abſolute, * *Let every Soul be ſubject to the higher Powers*, without any Exception or Limitation. Nor does this Power depend upon the Religion of the Prince; for this Precept was given when the chief Magiſtrate was a Heathen and a Perſecutor. *Nero* and *Diocleſian* were as much intitled to it as *Conſtantine* or *Theodoſius*. Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, whilſt on Earth, acknowledged and ſubmitted to the *Roman* Governor of *Judea*, and paid Tribute † when demanded of him, as well as the reſt

* Rom. xiii. 1. † Matt. xvii. 27.

of his Countrymen. When he ſtood before *Pontius Pilate*, he did not demur to the Juriſdiction of the Court, nor the Authority of the Governor; but freely confeſſed it, and that *he had received it from God**: His Apoſtles, and all his faithful Servants followed his Example in this Particular. *Paul*, when he ſtood before *Feſtus*, to anſwer the ſeveral Articles exhibited againſt him by the *Jews*, declares † *he ſtood before* Ceſar's *Judgment-Seat, where he ought to be judged*; and therefore pleads, ‡ *that neither againſt the Law of the Jews, neither againſt the Temple, nor yet againſt* Ceſar, *had he offended any thing at all.* Nay, the *Roman*-Catholics themſelves, who are not bigotted to the Court of *Rome*, have acknowledged all Perſons without Exception to be ſubject to the civil Magiſtrate. Thus the Faculty of *Paris*, *Anno* 1663, declared, that all Subjects owed ſuch Allegiance to their King, that no Power upon Earth could, upon any Pretence whatſoever, abſolve them from it. And ſeveral of the Miſſionaries in this Kingdom have made the like Declarations; and would not recant, though they have been cenſured and excommunicated by the Pope for ſo doing, as is evident from the *Cauſa Valeriana* (publiſhed at *London* by *Peter Walſh*, a *Franciſcan* Friar, and printed by *J. Brome*, 1684.) Let me give you from thence the Words of Part of a Proteſtation made by the *Roman*-Catholic Clergy of *Ireland*, ſignified by a Biſhop and above twenty other Regulars and Seculars of that Communion. The Words are theſe: *We profeſs that all abſolute Princes and ſupreme Magiſtrates, of what Religion ſoever they be, are God's Vice-*

* John xix. 11. † Acts xxv. 10. ‡ Acts xxv. 8.

gerents upon Earth, and to them respectively, according to the Laws of every Commonwealth, Obedience is due in civil and temporal Matters; and for this Cause we protest against all Doctrine and Authority to the contrary. So far we all agree about the Power of the Prince over all Ecclesiastical Persons. The greatest Difficulty is about Ecclesiastical Causes, and Matters purely spiritual. Here the common Distinction has its true and proper Use. He has Authority *circa sacra*, but not *in sacris*. He cannot ordain a Priest, or consecrate a Church; he cannot administer the Sacraments; he cannot excommunicate an impenitent Sinner, nor absolve a Penitent, nor execute any Part of the sacerdotal Office: Yet in the Direction, Regulation, and Protection of the Church and its Ministers in the Exercise of their respective Offices, in enforcing the Ecclesiastical Discipline by the temporal Authority, and restraining and punishing stubborn and obstinate Offenders with the civil Sword; he has a great and sufficient Power in all *spiritual Causes*. He has also Power to judge of all Doctrines, and declare whether this or that Faith, or this or that Article of Faith, shall be preached in his Dominions. I do not say that such a Law binds the Clergy in his Dominions to an *active Obedience*; but if it be established by the intire legislative Authority, it binds all Subjects to a *passive Obedience*; they are obliged to submit to the Penalties inflicted by the Law, and not to resist the Authority of the Magistrate by human Force. The supreme Magistrate may abuse his Authority, by enacting what is contrary to the Law and Will of God; yet the Subjects have no Right to judge him for it; that belongs properly to God, to whom alone all supreme legisla-

tive Powers are ſubject. For the ſupreme Power, in what Hands ſoever it is lodged, under what Form of Government ſoever it exerts itſelf, whether in a ſingle Perſon, or a Community, can have no Superior upon Earth. To aſſert the contrary is a direct Contradiction in Terms, and ſuppoſes that the *ſupreme Power* can have *a Superior* to limit or control it.

Saving, therefore, all the Rights of temporal Princes, it plainly appears, that the Church, as a purely *ſpiritual Society* in the Exerciſe of her ſpiritual Powers, is intirely independent upon the State as it ſubſiſted ſome hundreds of Years, in direct Oppoſition to the greateſt temporal Powers then upon Earth. Now it is eſſential to every Society to be inveſted with ſuch Powers and Privileges as are neceſſary for their Support and Security, and to promote the ſeveral Purpoſes and Intentions of their Charter: As particularly that of chooſing their own Governors and Directors: And, ſecondly, of enacting and executing ſuch Laws as may from time to time be thought neceſſary for the Good of the whole, to meet and conſult upon all Emergencies, to cenſure, puniſh, and expel unworthy Members, and unfaithful Officers, and enforce, by proper Penalties, the Obedience and Submiſſion of all the Members of the Society. Theſe have been, in all Ages, declared to be the inherent original Rights of the Church, which cannot, without Treachery, be given up, nor, without Sacrilege, invaded; and that this was the uniform Practice of the Church, appears from every Part of its Hiſtory. As the Well-being of every Society depends chiefly upon its Directors and Governors, becauſe they have the greateſt Power to do Good or Hurt; therefore, where

where the Choice of the Governors of one Society is in the Hands of another Society (as if the Church ſhould make Laws, and chooſe Miniſters for the State in temporal Matters; or the State *vice verſâ* for the Church in Matters purely ſpiritual) then is that Society intirely ſubject to the other. And whereas no Society can ſubſiſt without meeting and conſulting about their Affairs, and giving proper Orders as Occaſion ſhall require; if one Society cannot meet to conſider of their own proper Affairs, nor enact Laws, nor give Directions for the better Regulation and Improvement of the Society, without the Leave and Authority of another Society; then is the former in a manner diſſolved, and its Charter deſtroyed, becauſe it ſubſiſts precariouſly as to the Exerciſe of any Power upon the mere Will and Pleaſure of another. This is a Degree of Subjection to which the *Roman* Governors did never reduce the Church of the *Jews*; for their High-Prieſts and Elders, their *Sanhedrim*, or great Council, met whenever they pleaſed, as we frequently find in the Goſpels and Acts of the Apoſtles. And ſo we find the Chriſtian Church always did, even whilſt ſhe was under a State of Oppreſſion and Perſecution. They conſtantly met together as Occaſion required, to elect Governors and make Laws for the better Government of the Society, without any legal or regular Interpoſition or Reſtraint from the civil Powers. I ſay *legal and regular*, becauſe tho' perhaps they might be interrupted and hindered ſometimes by the Tyranny and Violence of their temporal Superiors, yet that was no more than the moſt regular and legal Convention may ſuffer from the Violence and Oppreſſion of a powerful Enemy, or tyrannical Prince.

Let

Let us first consider the original State and Institution of Episcopacy, and the constant Methods of supplying their vacant Sees. *The first Bishop*, as I observed before, was JESUS CHRIST himself: The chief Shepherd and BISHOP of Souls, who, at his Ascension into Heaven, delegated to his Apostles the whole Power that himself had received from his Father. When the Apostles had for some time exercised this Episcopal Authority by themselves, because the Number of the Faithful daily increased, and they themselves could not live always, that the Church might not want proper Governors, invested with the same Authority, to supply their Places, they ordained others, by virtue of their divine Commission, and set them over particular Churches, that they might ordain Presbyters, and govern their respective Flocks committed to their Charge. For as the Apostolical Commission extended to all Parts of the World, being authorized * *to teach* (or make Disciples of) *all Nations*; † *to go into all the World, and preach the Gospel to every Creature:* So it was impossible it should be long fixed or confined to any one particular Place, and therefore it was necessary that Pastors and Teachers should be settled in every Congregation of Believers, who might continue to instruct and teach them, to offer up Prayers for them in the public Assemblies, administer the holy Sacraments, and perform all other sacerdotal Offices among them: Hereupon ‡ *they ordained them Elders in every Church*; that is, a Bishop, with a competent Number of Presbyters and Deacons to assist him. It has been a Dispute among the

* Matt. xxviii. 19. † Mark xvi. 15. ‡ Acts xiv. 23.

Learned,

Learned, whether the Apostles themselves constituted any Archbishops or Metropolitans. Dr. *Hammond* * supposes *Timothy* and *Titus* to be such †. *Peter de Marcâ*, the late learned Archbishop of *Paris*, declares himself of the same Opinion, as does our late learned Bishop *Beveridge* ‡. Whether their Institution was Apostolical or no, it is however certain that it is of very great Antiquity. And the Nature of their Office, though under other Names, frequently mentioned in the Acts and Canons of the most antient Councils: Such are the Names *Primates*, and *primæ sedis Episcopi*. Thus it is declared, in the 34th Apostolical Canon, That the Bishops shall do nothing without the Primate, except in their own Dioceses, nor the Primate without the Bishops. This was directly the Archiepiscopal or Metropolitical Authority, though the Names of Metropolitan and Archbishop were not introduced into the Church till the fourth Century.

For the better understanding of this, it will be necessary to observe, that the *Roman* Empire, which contained almost all the known Part of Christendom, was, by *Augustus Cesar*, divided into Provinces, which was afterwards a little altered by *Adrian* I. and afterwards by *Constantine*, but without any Change in the Nature of Government, only the Seat of the President was removed from one City to another, and the Extent of the Province enlarged or diminished. In each of these Provinces was one City called the Metropolis, or Mother City, where was usually the greatest Resort, and the ordinary Residence of the Governor of

* Annot. Acts 11. † De concordiâ Sacerd. & Imp. Lib. VI. *c.* 1. ‡ Annot. ad Can. Apost. 34.

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the Province. The Apoſtles, who, by their Commiſſion from their Maſter, were obliged to proſelyte all Nations, could not ſtay long in any one Place; but having diſperſed themſelves into the ſeveral Provinces, and made ſome Numbers of Converts, they fixed a Biſhop in each of the principal Cities where they ſaw it neceſſary, and gave theſe Biſhops Commiſſion, as other Cities of the Province ſhould be converted, to fix Biſhops in them alſo.

The Apoſtles being very careful to fix the moſt extraordinary Perſons in the Metropolitan Cities, where was the greateſt Occaſion for Men of the moſt eminent Gifts and Abilities; this cauſed the other Biſhops of the Provinces to make their Application to them for Advice upon the moſt important Affairs, and to pay a particular Deference and Reſpect to them upon all Occaſions. So that though all the Biſhops conſtituted by the Apoſtles were of equal Authority as Biſhops, and therefore, when a new Biſhop was to be choſen, they all met together to conſecrate him, yet they ſtill yielded a Precedency to the Biſhop of the Metropolis; and ſo they did when they aſſembled to conſult about any Affairs of the Church. This was found to be the moſt prudent and convenient Method to preſerve the Unity of the Church in ſeveral Provinces. All provincial Councils (and in thoſe Ages there could be no other) always met in the Metropolis of that Province. And as they were then under the Juriſdiction of the Metropolitan, they conſidered him as the Preſident or Moderator of the Seſſion, to whom they paid a due Deference and Subjection. And as it was neceſſary for the Biſhops to meet frequently upon the Affairs of the Church in every Province,

Province, it was therefore neceſſary that a Primacy ſhould be granted to one of them, to ſummon and convene the reſt.

I have been the longer upon this Article, becauſe it tends to explain the primitive Manner of electing Biſhops into vacant Sees. Upon the Death of a Biſhop, the comprovincial Biſhops met together with their Metropolitan to elect a new one. This we learn from the Council of *Nice*, which had very carefully examined into the Practice of the moſt primitive Times, where it is decreed, *Can.* 4. That a Biſhop ought chiefly to be conſtituted by all the Biſhops of the Province; but if this be too difficult, either through urgent Occaſions, or the Length of the Way, yet *three* muſt be preſent for that Purpoſe, and have the Conſent of the Abſent under their Hands, and ſo to make the Conſecration. But the Confirmation of all Things to be done in the Province muſt be referred to the Metropolitan. The Council of *Laodicea* about the ſame time decrees, *Can.* 12, 13, That Biſhops, approved both in Faith and Doctrine, ſhould be conſtituted for the Government of the Church by the Metropolitans and neighbouring Biſhops. Now though the Biſhops had the undoubted Right to conſtitute other Biſhops upon every Vacancy, yet the People were not intirely excluded; their Conſent was generally aſked, and they had the Privilege of making Exceptions to any Perſons nominated for Election: The Reſemblance of which is ſtill kept up in the Ordinations and Conſecrations uſed in the Church of *England*; though both here and there they are no otherwiſe conſidered than as Witneſſes, and

not Judges, as the late learned Biſhop *Stillingfleet* obſerves * Sometimes the Biſhops permitted them to nominate and recommend a proper Perſon, and if they found him deſerving, and duly qualified according to the antient Canons, they elected him; if not, if they judged him unfit, they refuſed him. It ſeems indeed, in ſome Parts of Hiſtory, as if the People commonly recommended ſome Perſons to the Clergy, who choſe one, and preſented him to the Metropolitan and Biſhops, who they either conſecrated or rejected, as they thought fit: But this was not a Matter of Right; the People could by no means pretend to claim it: It was a mere prudential Indulgence, that they might be the better pleaſed and ſatisfied with their new Biſhop, as having given their own Conſent and Approbation to the Election. But it is beyond all Diſpute certain, that the Power of Election, as well as Conſecration, was intirely in the Biſhops, as it was originally in the Apoſtles. As the Apoſtles received and exerciſed ſuch a Power independent of the People, ſo they conveyed the ſame to the individual Perſons of their Succeſſors. There are two remarkable Inſtances of this in the Caſe of *Timothy* and *Titus*, to whom the Apoſtle gives particular Directions and Inſtructions with regard to their Ordination of Biſhops in their ſeveral Provinces. The Commiſſion to *Timothy* is directly referred to in theſe Words, † *The Things which thou haſt heard of me among many Witneſſes, the ſame commit thou to faithful Men, who ſhall be able to teach others.*—The Subſtance of

* Antiq. Brit. Churches, *p.* 97. † 2 Tim. ii. 2.

Titus's

Titus's Commiſſion is, * *For this Cauſe left I thee in* Crete, *that thou ſhouldſt ſet in order the Things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City, as I had appointed thee.* In both theſe Caſes we find the intire Right and Power of electing and conſecrating the Governors of the Church, that each of them, in their ſingle Perſons, are expreſsly ſpecified and directed in the Charge and Execution of it. In the firſt it is plainly expreſſed, *Commit* THOU, *&c.*—In the ſecond, and *that* THOU *ſhouldſt ordain Elders*, &c.—*as I had appointed* THEE.

And as, in the Nature of Things, it was apparently neceſſary that the Church, as a Society diſtinct from the State, ſhould have a Power of electing its own Governors, which was inconteſtably the original Practice of the primitive Church; ſo it was equally neceſſary that ſhe ſhould have a Power of convening theſe Governors upon any Emergency, for the more regular and convenient Exerciſe of her ſpiritual Authority, ſuch as the Election of Biſhops, the determining Controverſies, cenſuring Heretics and Schiſmatics, enacting Laws for the better Preſervation of Decency and Uniformity, and the puniſhing obſtinate and incorrigible Sinners. And this, as appears from Hiſtory, was the conſtant Practice of the Catholic Church from the Beginning. It cannot be imagined that they would apply to the heathen Governors for Leave to aſſemble upon proper Occaſions to conſult and provide for the Neceſſities of the Church, and the Maintenance of a Religion which they hated and perſecuted, and would for that Reaſon certainly have

* Titus i. 5.

refuſed

refuſed to comply with any Requeſt or Petition of that Kind. But when the Emperors became Chriſtian, it cannot be doubted but that they promoted and encouraged, upon all Occaſions, the Biſhops meeting together in Councils, and protected and aſſiſted them with the civil Power, in the Diſcharge of every Branch of their Epiſcopal Duty; nor do I believe it can ever be made appear, that they at any time attempted to forbid or prevent their Meeting, whenever they thought fit to aſſemble themſelves. For as they were always ready to convene them in general Councils, upon any notable Emergency, ſo they neither did nor could prevent the calling provincial Synods, which, by the 30th Apoſtolical Canon, were appointed to be held regularly twice every Year, *viz.* the firſt on the 4th Week after *Eaſter*, and the ſecond on the 12th Day of *October*, to determine all Doctrines of Religion among themſelves, and to put an End to all Eccleſiaſtical Controverſies that may happen. This was afterwards confirmed and enforced by the 5th Canon of the Council of *Nice*, and the 20th Canon of the Council of *Antioch*, with this Addition, That the Metropolitan ſhould ſummon the other Biſhops, and that without a Metropolitan no Synod ſhould be holden.

This appears to have been the conſtant and uniform Practice of the primitive Church in their Election of Biſhops, and convening of Synods, without any Interruption or Interpoſition of the ſecular Powers. The firſt Attempt that we read of to ſubvert this original and natural Exerciſe of Eccleſiaſtical Power was made by the Donatiſts, who appealed

to

to the Emperor *Constantine* in an Ecclesiastical Cause, to decide a Dispute they had raised concerning the Election of *Cæcilian* into the See of *Carthage*. But this godly Emperor, in a Letter to the Bishops of the Council of *Arles* (which is extant *inter Gesta purgationis Cæciliani & Falicis in fine Optati, Edit. Paris.*) refused to accept their Appeal, as not belonging to him, and owned *that the Bishops were the only proper Judges of their own Order; for that he himself was to be subject to them.* He says, it was *the Work of the Devil, and an outragious daring Fury in these Donatists, whom therefore he calls Proditors*, to refuse to submit to the *Judgment of their Bishops*, which he calls *the heavenly Judgment*; and says, the Contempt of it is an Insult offered to God himself. He says, *It is as clear as the Sun at Noon-day, that God had ordained his Church only to judge in such Cases*, and refused to be joined in Commission with them, as if he had any Part in it. *What Madness* (says he) *possesses them that with incredible Arrogance, they think they may do that which cannot lawfully be either spoke or heard, and departing from the rightful Judgment which God hath ordained, they require my Judgment together with that of the Church! What malignant Violence possesses them! How often have they been justly reproved by myself for those wicked Additions to God's Word in these Cases! For I declare (as the Truth is) that the Judgment of Priests ought to be accounted as the Judgment of God himself.* So far was this pious Emperor from claiming any Kind or Degree of spiritual Jurisdiction over the Church, that he calls it *an Addition to God's Word.* As the Donatists were the first who appealed to the civil Power from the Decisions of the Church, in a

Matter of purely Eccleſiaſtical Cognizance; ſo the *Euſebians* did the ſame to *Conſtantius*, the firſt heretical Emperor; who made ſuch Uſe of the Advantage they gave him, that he had well nigh overthrown the Chriſtian Faith. But *Athanaſius* and *Hoſius* with great Zeal oppoſed and proteſted againſt this dangerous Innovation and Violation of the Rights of the Church, ſaying, that they that did appeal to *Conſtantius* in Eccleſiaſtical Matters, did ſet him up inſtead of Chriſt: That to make himſelf a Prince of Biſhops, and to preſide in Eccleſiaſtical Judicature, made him the very ſame Abomination of Deſolation, foretold by *Daniel* the Prophet, * *Do not* (ſays *Hoſius* the aged Biſhop of *Corduba*) *concern thyſelf in Eccleſiaſtical Affairs, nor command us in theſe Matters; but rather learn thoſe Things of us. God hath given to thee the Empire, and he hath entruſted us with thoſe Things that belong to the Church. And as he that with malignant Eyes reproacheth thy Empire, oppoſeth the Ordinance of God; ſo do thou beware, leſt drawing to thee thoſe Things that belong to the Church, thou thereby fall into a heavy Condemnation. It is written, Give unto Ceſar the Things that are Ceſar's, and to God the Things that are God's. It is not lawful for us, O Emperor, to invade thy earthly Empire; neither haſt thou the Power of holy Things* †.

The late Biſhop *Burnet*, who was never ſuſpected of Partiality to his own Epiſcopal Order, tells us in his Hiſtory of the Regale, *p.* 30. That *Conſtantine* did abſolutely renounce the Power of electing Biſhops,

* Athan. Ep. ad Solitar. *p.* 861, 862.
† Athan. ibid. *p.* 639.

of which he produces several Instances; that writing to the Bishops assembled at *Antioch* for the Election of a Bishop, he leaves the Choice intirely to them, desiring them that the Election may be made according to the Rule of the Church, and the Tradition of the Apostles, *p.* 31. He takes notice of *Constantius*'s depriving the orthodox Bishops, and putting *Arians* in their Rooms by his own Authority; and he quotes an Epistle of *Hilary* writing to these Court-Bishops: *O ye Bishops, I pray you what Suffrages did the Apostles make use of? did they receive their Dignity from the Palace?* But then he tells us afterwards, that this Precedent was not universally followed. Though some furious Emperors pushed hard, after the Example of *Constantius*, to enlarge their Prerogative, yet others refused it. He tells us, *p.* 37, 38. how the Emperor *Valentinian*, about the Year 347, upon the Death of *Alexentius*, Bishop of *Milan*, who was an *Arian*, called the Bishops together, and desired them *to choose such a Bishop, as might both by his Life and Doctrine instruct those whom he was to govern, and that he might see such a Person set up, as that he who held the Empire, might chearfully submit himself to him.* This Speech of the Emperor's, as related by *Theodoret*, Lib. IV. Cap. 6, 7, is so very remarkable, that I cannot help giving it you intire in his own Words. Having convened the Bishops, he addressed himself to them in these Words: * *You who have*

* Ἴστε σαφῶς ἃ τὲ δὴ τοῖς θείοις λόγοις ἐντεθραμμένοι ὁποῖον εἶναι προσήκει τὸν Ἀρχιερωσύνης ἠξιωμένον· καὶ ὡς ὲ χρὴ λόγῳ μόνῳ, ἀλλα καὶ βίῳ τὲς Ἀρχομένους ῥυθμίζειν, καὶ πάσης ἀρετῆς ἑαυτὸν ἀρχέτυπον προτιθέναι, καὶ μαρτυρα ἔχειν τῆς διδασκαλίας τὸν πολι-

have been bred up in the Study of the Holy Scriptures, cannot be ignorant what Qualifications are required in a good Bishop, that he ought to instruct the People committed to his Charge, not only by his Preaching, but by his Life and Conversation, that he ought to propose his own Example as the Pattern of all Virtues, and the Sanctity of his Life as the truest Proof of the Soundness of his Doctrine. See therefore that ye place such a Man in the Episcopal Chair, that we who have the supreme temporal Authority, may sincerely and heartily obey him, and receive his Reproofs as a wholesome Remedy for those Faults, into which, through human Frailty, we shall sometimes unavoidably fall.

The Bishop, after this, proceeds to give several Instances of Emperors, Kings, and Princes, who, purely out of Conscience, renounced all Pretensions to Ecclesiastical Power, though conveyed down to them with the temporal from their Ancestors. He tells us, *p.* 93. That the Emperor *John Comnenus*, about the Year of Christ 1130, condemned the Exercise of the civil Power in the Election of Bishops, and mentions a severe Law which *Manuel Comnenus* made against it, in which he calls it *a wicked Custom.* Again, *p.* 97, 98. a later Instance is given, in the XIVth Century, of *John Catacuzenus* the Emperor; and Part of the Speech is set down, which he made to the Bishops who were met for the Election of a Patriarch. He told them they ought to follow the

Τέλειαν· τοιοῦτον δὴ ἔν γε νῦν Ἀρχιερατικοῖς εἰκαθιδρύσαιτε θώκοις, ὅπως γε ἡμεῖς τὴν βασιλειάν ἰθυνοῦμεν, εἰλικρινῶς αὐτῷ τὰς ἡμετέρας ὑποκλίνωμεν κεφαλὰς, καὶ τὰς παρ' ἐκείνῳ γενομένας ἐλέγχως, ἀνθρώπως γάρ ὄφλας καὶ προσπταίειν ἀνάγκη ὡς ἰκλρικον ἀσπασώμεθα θεραπείαν. Theod. Lib. IV. *c.* 6.

Steps

Steps of the Apostles and Fathers, who, being met together, invocated the Holy Ghost, and implored the Grace of God to direct them in the Choice of one that should govern the Church according to his Will. He acknowledged that in Elections, great Errors had been committed, which Men were apt to excuse, as they did all their other Sins that were dear to them; for it was certainly a mocking God, first to resolve who shall be Patriarch, and then to meet and hypocritically pray for the divine Direction and Assistance. This he confessed he had done himself, and he did not doubt but his Predecessors had done the same; wherefore he ingenuously confessed his Sin, and declared that he would never be guilty of it more. Then in *France*, he tells us, *p.* 190, 191. That when Pope *Lucius* the Second, to court the Favour of *Lewis* the Seventh about the Year 1148, sent him a Bull with a Privilege, that in all his Cathedrals *he should dispose of the first Vacancy, and enjoy the mean Profits*; he burnt the Bull, and said *he would rather burn* 10,000 *such Grants, than have his Soul tormented in Hell-fire.* And, *p.* 209, he tells us, That *Alphonsus*, Count *de Toulouse*, did, about the Year 1138, not only renounce, but condemn, the Exercise of temporal Power in Ecclesiastical Cases, which his Predecessors had enjoined in his Dominions, and calls it *that most wicked Custom of his Ancestors*; by which they seized violently on the Goods of the deceased Bishops. One Branch of the Royal Power was the Presentation to Bishoprics and other Church-Dignities. The other was the seizing the Revenues during the Vacancy; and this was a Temptation to keep them long vacant. And both these Branches

of Power were condemned and given up by these and several other religious Princes, as an Usurpation upon the Kingdom of Christ, though some of their Successors took it up afterwards, as they were otherwise inclined.

I hope it pretty plainly appears what Sort and Degree of Power the Church was originally invested with, considered as a spiritual Society distinct from the civil: And what the uniform Practice of the antient Church was in these two great Branches of Power in every Society, that of electing their own Governors, and enacting and executing their own Laws, for the better Direction and Security of the Whole, and answering the several important Ends of their Institution. And that the *British* Church was formed by the same Model as a Member of the same Catholic Church; that she enjoyed the same Privileges, and exercised the same Authority, cannot (we presume) be denied or disputed. That she was first founded by St. *Paul* himself, the learned Bishop *Stillingfleet* * thinks highly probable. And she was acknowledged and recognized by *Tertullian* † and ‡ *Origen*. And, at the Council of *Arles*, *anno* 314, we find three *British* Bishops subscribing it; *Eborius* Bishop of *York*, *Restitutus* Bishop of *London*, and *Adelphius de Civitate Coloniæ Londinensium*; but what Place that was, the Learned are not agreed. But it seems as if there were at that Time three Provinces in *Britain*, every one of which sent a Bishop to this Council; so that upon the Whole, one would ima-

* Antiq. Brit. *ch.* i. † Contra Judæos, *c.* vii.
‡ In Ezek. Hom. 4.

gine

gine that there had been an uninterrupted Succeſſion of Biſhops in the *Britiſh* Church from the apoſtolical Times. As it was certain they ſat in the Council of *Arles*, ſo it is more than probable they ſat alſo in the Council of *Nice*, upon many Conſiderations collected by the above-mentioned learned Writer * ; from whence we may be ſufficiently enabled to judge what was the Senſe and Practice of the *Britiſh* Church at that Time concerning their ſpiritual Privileges and Immunities. The Biſhops there aſſembled made twenty Canons for the Government and Diſcipline of the Church, in which they partly reinforced the Canons of the Council of *Arles*, and added ſome new ones in which were particularly ſettled the two grand Points of Eccleſiaſtical Polity. 1. The Election and Conſecration of Biſhops. And 2. The calling Provincial Synods. The former is expreſsly declared in the fourth Canon, which I have already quoted, *That a Biſhop ought to be conſtituted by all the Biſhops of the Province*, &c.—By this Canon, the Government of the Church was now ſettled under the Protection, and with the Approbation, of the Emperor *Conſtantine*. The only Difficulty lies in this firſt Clauſe, What is meant by *the Biſhops of the Province conſtituting a new Biſhop* ; whether the Right of Election is hereby devolved upon them, or only the Right of Conſecration upon the Election of the Prince or People, or both. Which is therefore fit to be inquired into, becauſe the antient Practice of the *Britiſh* Church may be fully known, which we juſtly preſume was agreeable to the *Nicene* Canon, which themſelves

* Antiq. Brit. *c.* iii.

had signed as binding to themselves and their Principals. And because the Signification of the *Greek* Word is ambiguous, we must see what Sense the *Greek* Writers put upon it. *Balsamon* interprets καθίσασθαι by ψηφίζεσθαι, which signifies to choose by Suffrage or Ballot; and he plainly affirms, that by this Canon the Right of Election is taken from the People, and given to the Bishops of the Province. *Zonaras and Blastares* are of the same Opinion. It cannot be denied that the People had the Privilege of proposing and recommending Persons to be chosen, and of offering their Exceptions against any Persons whom on canonical Grounds they judged to be undeserving; but all this was ultimately referred to the Bishops and Metropolitan, who were to judge of the Merits of the Persons, and to elect or refuse accordingly. If their Exceptions were just and well proved, the Bishops, as Judges, were to proceed canonically against them, and then they went to a new Nomination; but still the Judgment rested in the Provincial Synod. So in the 16th Canon of the Council of *Antioch*, it is provided, that though all the People choose one actually a Bishop, yet if he takes possession of his See, without a perfect Provincial Synod, the Metropolitan being present, he is to be cast out. But in no Synodical Act or Canon does it appear, that the Prince had any Right to elect or constitute a Bishop by virtue of his own Royal Authority. The second Branch of Ecclesiastical Power, *the calling Provincial Synods*, was also fully settled in this Council, and the Apostolical Canon fully confirmed, *viz. that Provincial Synods be held twice a Year, in Lent and Autumn.* Which we may therefore fairly conclude was the constant Practice of the *British* as well as other Christian Churches.

And now I expect to be asked, if this were the original Institution confirmed by innumerable Canons, and the uniform Practice of the whole Christian Church, how came it to be violated? Who first dared to invade these inherent Privileges of this spiritual Society? By what Artifice or Violence were they wrested from them? and by what Steps were those Encroachments made, of which (you know I speak for my Clients) they too justly complain?—Fair and softly! good Sir, we are got among the Briars, which must be handled very gently, for fear of pricking our Fingers——*The first Step* towards it seems to have been an excessive Complaisance in the Governors of the Church to the first Christian Emperors. The just Sense they had of their happy Deliverance from a State of Persecution, under which they had groaned for three hundred Years, naturally threw them into Transports of Gratitude and Joy; and as they found their great Deliverer and Protector most zealously attached to the Interests of Religion, and the Security and Honour of the Church, they thought they could never shew too much Regard for him, who had shewn so much for them, which is certainly right. Yet through the Weekness of human Nature, the excessive Veneration which the Bishops paid to their heroic Patron and religious Defender, whom they ought rather to have considered only as an Instrument in the Hands of God for their Deliverance, seems to have made some Impressions of Vanity upon his Mind, insomuch that before he himself was a Catechumen, he took upon him to write to the Bishops with an Air of Authority, and the Language of Instruction. Which *Eusebius* in his Life takes notice of: *Even to myself* (says he) *the Writer*

*ter of this History**, *he sent a very learned Preachment.* Upon which Passage, *Valesius*, in his Annotations †, makes this Remark, *That this Emperor, though not yet a Catechumen, wrote in a Language more becoming a Bishop or Doctor of the Church. He was certainly a Prince divinely enlightened and commissioned by God for the Propagation of the Christian Faith, to whom the Christian Church is more indebted than to any one particular Person since the Days of the Apostles. But yet in Ecclesiastical Affairs he took more upon him, than became any Layman though a Prince; the Bishops in a manner leaving every thing to his Direction, for joy that they were under the Protection of a Christian Emperor.* And though it is very certain that he employed all his Power for the Interest and Security of the Church and Christian Religion, as appears particularly in his summoning the Council of *Nice*, in the providing all Necessaries for the convenient Carriage and Maintenance of the several Bishops who were to attend it, and the constant and reverent Attendance he himself paid during the whole Session: Yet was this an unlucky Precedent for his Son and Successor *Constantius*, who expected the same Deference from the Bishops to his

* Λογικωτέραν κατέπεμπε διδασκαλίαν· *p.* 606.

† In his omnibus [epistolis] Constantinus tametsi adhùc vix Catechumenus, Doctorem agit. Fuit certè Constantinus, quod negari non potest, Vir Deo plenus & a Deo missus ad Christianæ fidei propagationem, cui uni post Apostolos plurimum debemus. Idem tamen in negotiis Ecclesiasticis, aliquanto plus sibi vindicavit, quam laico principi conveniret: Episcopis curatæ illi permittentibus, multumque sibi gratulantibus, quod Christianum Imperatorem viderent. *Valef. Annot. de Vitâ Constantini, lib.* iii. *c.* 51.

Imperial

Imperial Authority, which had on quite other grounds been paid to his Father. This Power he grosly abused, by calling several Synods of *Arian* Bishops to destroy the Orthodox Faith, and banishing those who had the Courage to maintain and defend it. Their Successors in the Empire took care never to drop their Pretences to Ecclesiastical Authority. Orthodox Princes, who had no other view but the protecting the Catholic Faith and its true Professors, and made no other use of their Power, were hardly thought to exceed the Bounds of their civil Authority, so long as they never pretended to exercise or claim any Authority purely spiritual: But when an Infidel, an Heretic, or Apostate, got into the Throne, they made use of the same Power to distress the Church, which the Orthodox and Religious had employed to protect and defend it. Yet in the Heighth of their Malignity, we believe it hard to produce an Instance of any Emperor pretending to the sole Nomination of a Bishop by his own Authority, though they might influence the Clergy or People in Favour of their Creatures and Favourites, which occasioned many Canons to be made to discourage and prevent it. And what could they do more to shew the Sense and Practice of the Church upon those Occasions? Any other Opposition to the Will of an arbitrary Prince, unawed by Religion, would have been fruitless and dangerous, and indeed was morally impossible: For without all Doubt, they got the vacant Sees filled with such Creatures as they knew to be intirely at their Disposal; Men that should never murmur at the Hand that raised them, nor offer to oppose the Will and Pleasure of their Sovereign.

Nothing

Nothing therefore can be argued from the Silence and Compliances of these obsequious Gentlemen; this could be no Proof of the Sense and Practice of the Church. So far from it, that, besides the Reasons from the Nature of the Thing, besides the Evidence of History, and the Sentiments of particular Fathers in every Age; * there are several Canons upon Record, made even by general Councils as well as others, that plainly and fully assert and confirm these Immunities of the Church, and her independent Authority in this Point: In many of which it is made *Excommunication* and *Deprivation* to appeal from the Bishop to the King, or any secular Power, in Ecclesiastical Cases; or for any Bishop to be made, not only by the King's Command, but if he make use of the Interest or Recommendation of temporal Princes to obtain his Bishopric by their Means: And that all Elections of Bishops, Presbyters, or Deacons, by the secular Magistrate, shall be void. And the Method of their Election is set down, *viz.* Of Presbyters and Deacons by the Bishop, and of the Bishop by the comprovincial Bishops. And that this was the Practice of the antient *British* Church, is hardly to be doubted; of which we have many remarkable Proofs in Sir *Harry Spelman*'s *History of the* English *Councils*.

But that which most of all contributed to the Subversion of these original Rights and Immunities, were

* Can. Apost. 30, 31. 1 Council of Nice, *c.* 4. Constant. 2d Gen. Coun. Can. 6. Chalced. 4th Gen. Coun. *c.* 9. 2d Coun. Nice, *c.* 3, Constant. 8th Gen. Coun. *c.* 22. Coun. of Eliberis, *c.* 56.

the

the Papal Uſurpations, under the Maſk of a pretended Zeal for their Defence and Protection. The Primacy, which, by the Conſtitution of the weſtern Church, had been affixed to the *Roman* See, for the better Correſpondence and Management of Juriſdiction in the Epiſcopal College, was, by degrees, improved into a Claim of univerſal and unlimited Supremacy; and that too, *Jure divino* over all his Collegues, over all the Biſhops of the Catholic Church. This was ſet up in the ſixth Century, by *John* Biſhop of *Conſtantinople*; who, when the Seat of the Empire was tranſlated thither, aſſumed the Title of *Oecumenical Biſhop*, of *Univerſal Patriarch*, which was ſeverely condemned by *Gregory* the Great; as may be ſeen at large in his Book of *Epiſtles* *. He calls it *a new Doctrine that had never been heard at* Rome, *and an Authority which none of her Biſhops had pretended to claim; that it was againſt the Doctrine of the Goſpel, againſt the Decrees of Canons, againſt the Right of all other Biſhops, and all other Churches.* With many other Things to the ſame Purpoſe; and many excellent Reaſons given for it, agreeable to the Sentiments of the Church in all Ages. Agreeable to which is the Declaration of St. *Cyprian*: † *Therefore the Epiſcopal College is large, and there are many*

* Lib. IV. Ep. 32, 33, 34, 36, 38. Lib. VI. Ep. 24, 28, 30, 39, *&c.*

† Iccirco, (Frater chariſſime) copioſum corpus eſt ſacerdotum, concordiæ mutuæ glutine copulatum, ut ſiquis ex Collegio noſtro Hæreſin facere, & gregem Chriſti lacerare & vaſtare tentaverit, ſubveniant cæteri, & quaſi paſtores utiles & miſericordes oves dominicas in gregem colligant. (& infra) Nam etſi paſtores multi ſumus, unum tamen gregem paſcimus. *Ep.* 68. *p.* 178.

Biſhops

Bishops joined together in the Bond of Unity, that if any Bishop of the College should propagate Heresy, and so seek to tear and waste the Flock of Christ, the rest might mercifully interpose for the saving of the Flock, and gather again the Sheep of the Lord into the Fold: For though we are many Pastors, yet we all feed the same Flock. And again, (says he) * *As there is but one Church through the whole World, divided into many Members; so there is but one Episcopate diffused through the numerous Agreement of many Bishops.* Among these, in the western Church, the Bishop of *Rome*, as the Metropolis of the Empire, held the first Place; and therefore Applications were made principally to him in the Affairs of the Church. But for any such universal Supremacy as is now pretended, as if he were the ultimate and infallible Judge of Controversy, it was totally unknown to those early Ages; in which, though there were many and great Controversies, yet no such Appeal to the Bishop of *Rome* is to be found in the History of those Times: And as it would (if believed) be the most summary Way of deciding Controversies, there is no doubt but we should have met with it upon many Occasions, where such Decisions would have been thought necessary. However it came to pass, the Bishops of *Rome* did at last, by the most refined Policy, get themselves to be acknowledged as universal Bishops of the western Church; but, finding they could not maintain their Usurpations over all the Bishops in the

* Cum sit a Christo una Ecclesia per totum mundum in multa membra divisa; item Episcopatus unus Episcoporum multorum concordi numerositate diffusus. *Ep.* 55. *p.* 112. *Ed. Oxon.*

World,

World, which they also claimed, without the Assistance of the temporal Powers; they were therefore content to divide the Spoil betwixt them: They graciously vouchsafed to give them the Nomination of some Bishops, and the Disposal of the Revenue of some Churches during the Vacancies, and some Peculiars exempt from the Jurisdiction of the Bishops, that they might defend and maintain the Papal Usurpations over the rest; both Sides erecting and enlarging their pretended Claims upon the Ruins of primitive Episcopacy. To secure this Point more effectually, *Grotius* tells us, * that Pope *Adrian* I. gave *Charles* the Great a Power to choose and invest with the Ring and pastoral Staff, (the Ensigns and Tokens of Episcopal Dignity) the Archbishops and Bishops in all the Provinces of his Empire; and that no Bishop should be consecrated that was not first invested by him. Though this Decree or Grant of Pope *Adrian* be generally esteemed by learned Men to be a Forgery, as being not mentioned by any Ecclesiastical Historian, (as it certainly would have been) till about the twelfth Century, near four hundred Years after it was said to be made; yet it is undeniable that this Custom did prevail through *France*, *Germany*, and *Italy*, *Spain*, *Hungary*, and *Britain*, and the whole *Latin* World; so that for three hundred Years together, the *Roman* Emperors chose all the Bishops, Abbots, Deans, and Prebends, in their Dominions, but upon a quite different Account than this pretended Papal Decree. For all the great Dignities were possessed of Lay-Fees,

* De Imp. & sum. Potest. cir. Sacra. *c.* x. § 24.

or

or Temporalities granted by the Piety of former Princes, for the better Support of their Dignity and Character. But such was the Nature of these Fiefs, that except they were made hereditary, which Ecclesiastical Fiefs never could be, upon the Death of any Feudatory, the Sovereign entered upon, and took possession of, the Fief, till he thought convenient to bestow it upon some other Person; and this was what the several Princes, in their Disputes with the Popes about that Matter, always insisted upon, without acknowledging any Right or Grant from the Papal See for so doing. So then, upon the Death of any Bishop, the Lay-fees or Temporalities fell of course into the Hands of the chief Lord, who had a Power to make a new Grant to whatever Person he pleased; and to enjoy all the mean Profits arising from them till such Grant was made. Wherefore though, by the Custom and Canons of the Church, the Election of a Bishop belonged to the Clergy and People, together with the Metropolitan and Comprovincial Bishops; yet it was at the Pleasure of the Prince whether the new Elect should enjoy the Temporalities of the Bishopric or not, because they reverted to his full Possession upon the Death of the former Bishop. Upon which Account, no doubt, the Electors were willing to quit their Right of Election to the Prince, on whose Favour alone the decent Maintenance and Support of his Dignity depended; or at least to elect the Person whom he should nominate and invest; well knowing that few Persons would be willing to undertake the Episcopal Burden, if there were no Revenues to support it. By which means, it came to pass, after the Introduction of the feudal Tenure by the *Goths* and *Vandals*,

Vandals, it became a general Cuſtom for all Sovereign Princes in the weſtern Churches to inveſt whom they pleaſed with the Temporalities of vacant Biſhoprics; and the Perſon ſo inveſted was conſecrated by the Metropolitan and provincial Biſhops. This continued in the Church of *Rome* above three hundred Years, till Pope *Hildebrand* ſet himſelf to oppoſe it, and others after him, and have brought it to the State in which we now ſee it. The Conſequences of this Method of *Inveſtiture* were very fatal to Religion. For Princes, eſpecially the Politic and Irreligious (and ſome ſuch no doubt there were) little regarded the Virtues and real Merits of thoſe whom they preferred to the higheſt Stations. If a Clergyman had any Dependence on the Prince, or ſome great Miniſter of State, ſo that he could do them Service in their political Schemes and temporal Affairs, this certainly advanced him to a good Biſhopric, without conſidering whether he were in any degree qualified for ſo ſacred and important an Office. So that Learning, Piety, Virtue, and Diligence in performing the Duties of their holy Function ſeldom recommended any one to Preferment: But whoever had any Hope of obtaining a Biſhopric, applied himſelf rather to make his Court to the Prince, by Attendance and Dependence upon great Men, rather than by his Learning, Piety, or faithful Diſcharge of his paſtoral Duty; from whence ſprung, in a great meaſure, that Ignorance, Barbariſm, and other ſtrange Corruptions, under which the Church ſo long groaned before the Reformation. This occaſioned many ſharp Conteſts between Popes and Princes, with various Succeſs and different Conſequences in different Countries, and they were forced

to make different Agreements, Compromiſes, Concordats, about the dividing the Eccleſiaſtical Spoil; ſo that there was hardly, in any one of the weſtern Churches, an uniform Method of ſupplying the vacant Churches. But the Pope had generally the Cunning to reſerve the beſt Share to himſelf, which ended in an intolerable Tyranny and Uſurpation, which, after many Struggles and Contentions in the ſeveral national Churches, too well known, and too tedious to be mentioned, gave a Handle to King *Henry* VIII. to give the finiſhing Stroke to the Papal Authority here in *England*, in which we are chiefly concerned. Upon throwing off the Papal Authority, inſtead of reſtoring to the Epiſcopal College their original inherent Privileges, of which they had been unjuſtly deprived by the Biſhop of *Rome*, the King ſeized to himſelf all that Supremacy in Eccleſiaſtical Matters, that the Pope had unjuſtly claimed as a ſupreme Biſhop or Vicar under Chriſt himſelf: To which they were compelled to conſent by an *Act of Submiſſion*; which has reduced them to a lower Degree of Subjection and Dependence than the moſt inconſiderable Corporation in this City. *The worſhipful Companies of Pinmakers and Watermen* have the Privilege of chooſing their own Maſters and Wardens, of meeting in their common Hall, of making and enacting ſuch By-laws (not contrary to the Laws of the Realm) as ſhall be thought proper for the better Government of their reſpective Societies, and of puniſhing, by Mulcts, or Fines, or civil Incapacities, ſuch of their Members as ſhall act in Oppoſition to the Authority of their proper Governors, and the Laws of the Community: But the *Engliſh* Clergy, conſidered as a Body Corporate,

have not the leaſt Shadow of Power in the Choice of their Biſhops, unleſs you pleaſe to except the Power of conſecrating the Man whom the King ſhall chooſe; *i. e. Hobſon*'s Choice, which they dare as well eat Fire as refuſe: Nor dare they meet in Convocation without the Royal Mandate, under the Pain of a *Præmunire.*

A Stranger to the Hiſtory of *England* would think it incredible, that a Point of ſuch Conſequence could be carried without any Difficulty; that the Body of the *Engliſh* Clergy, which were at that time very conſiderable, on account of their Intereſt and Riches, and by no means inconſiderable for Learning, as the State of Learning was at that time, ſhould ſo eaſily agree to ſtrip themſelves of all Eccleſiaſtical Power, and ſubmit themſelves and their Succeſſors to the Authority of temporal Powers; but we, who know the Temper of that Prince, can eaſily account for his ſucceſsful Management of that Affair. He had a particular kind of Logic to convince, as of Rhetoric to perſuade, thoſe who had not good Senſe enough to believe their Sovereign always in the right. Of which Sir *Harry Spelman* gives us a notable Inſtance in the Act for ſuppreſſing Monaſteries and religious Houſes under ſuch a Value. * "It is true, ſaid he, "the Parliament did give them to him; but ſo un- "willingly (as I have heard) that when the Bill had "ſtuck long in the lower Houſe, and could get no "Paſſage, he commanded the Commons to attend "him in the Forenoon in his Gallery, where he let "them wait till late in the Afternoon, and then

* Hiſtory of Sacrilege, *p.* 183.

" coming out of his Chamber, and taking a turn or " two among them, and looking angrily on them, " firſt on one Side, and then on the other; at laſt,— " *I hear* (ſaid he) *that my Bill will not paſs*; *but I will* " *have it paſs, or I will have ſome of your Heads.*— " And, without any other Rhetoric or Perſuaſion, " returned to his Chamber."—Any other Rhetoric!— What other Rhetoric could be expected? This was Rhetoric and Logic too with a Vengeance! Their Eyes were immediately opened, and their Underſtandings convinced, that his Majeſty's Commands were highly reaſonable; and therefore they immediately paſſed the Bill, and gave him all that his Soul deſired. And there is no doubt to be made but that the Act of Submiſſion was obtained by the ſame engaging Methods of Conviction and Perſuaſion. The Province of *Canterbury* complied immediately; they were under the immediate Inſpection and Rod of the Court: But the Province of *York* ſtood out for ſome time, and drew up their Reaſons for ſo doing (a Copy of which I have ſeen). Their Situation was at ſo great a Diſtance from the Court, that they thought they might have time to parley, and debate with their Governors, without any immediate Apprehenſions of Royal Vengeance; but they found themſelves miſtaken, and were quickly made to underſtand, that it would be their wiſeſt Way to be as complaiſant as their Brethren of *Canterbury* had been; and accordingly, without any more ado (as Biſhop *Burnet* tells us*) they acknowledged the King as *Supreme Head of the Church, and ſole Fountain of all Eccleſiaſtical Power.*

* Hiſt. Reform. Book II. *p.* 113.

The

The King, in order to terrify the Clergy into this Act of Submiſſion, had revived ſome obſolete Statutes, by which the whole Body of the Clergy were ſued in a *Premunire*, for having acknowledged a foreign Juriſdiction, and taken out Bulls, and had Suits in the Legatine Courts, contrary to the Laws of *England*. The Kings of *England* did claim in their turn, as well as the Popes, more Power in Eccleſiaſtical Matters than, by the original Conſtitution and uniform Practice and Conſent of the primitive Church, did properly belong to them; and theſe Claims and Demands on both Sides roſe and fell in Proportion to the Power and Ability that each had to ſupport and defend them; ſo that by Conſequence many extraordinary Steps were taken on both Sides, which, on Chriſtian and Catholic Principles, can never be defended, and therefore ought never to be drawn into Precedents upon other Occaſions. *Our Kings had formerly*, as Biſhop *Burnet* ſays *, *by their own Authority granted Inveſtitures* (which is certainly true) *and made Laws relating to Eccleſiaſtical Matters, Cauſes, and Perſons.* But this he ſays without Proof or Probability; and I believe it would be hard to produce any ſuch Law in Matters purely ſpiritual, I mean relating to the Doctrine or Diſcipline of the Church, made by the King's ſole Authority, otherwiſe than by confirming and enacting into a Law by the civil Authority, the Judgment and Deciſions of the Biſhops paſſed in their Diocefan or Provincial Synods: For however binding the Deciſions of the Church might be to Conſcience, yet had they not the Force and Nature of Laws, till

* Ibid.

confirmed by the Royal Authority, and enforced by temporal Sanctions. However, when the Popes began to extend their Authority beyond the Limits assigned by the Canons, they met with great Opposition in *England*, both in the Matter of Investitures, Appeals, Legates, and other Branches of their Usurpapation. Upon which many Laws were passed to condemn these Abuses, and restrain the several Invasions of the Royal Prerogative. In the 25th *Edw.* III. a severe Law was made, that all that transgressed were to be imprisoned, to be fined at Pleasure, and to forfeit all their Benefices. By a subsequent Act, they were put out of the King's Protection. Several other Confirmations of this were made in this Reign, and under *Rich.* II. And the former Punishments were extended not only to the Provisors, but to all that were employed by them, or took Farms of them. And in the sixteenth Year of this *Rich.* II. a Law was made, that if any purchased Translations, Excommunications, or Bulls from *Rome*, that were contrary to the King or his Crown, they, and all that brought them over, or that received and executed them, were declared to be out of the King's Protection; and that their Goods and Chattels should be forfeited to the King, and their Persons imprisoned; and because the Proceedings upon this were by a Writ called, from the most material Words in it, *Premunire facias*, this Statute carried the Name of the Statute of *Premunire*. Several Laws to the same Effect were made in the Reigns of *Hen.* IV. and V. These Statutes, which, in spite of all the Opposition made by the Court of *Rome*, and all their Endeavours to get them repealed, stood in full Force, were now

called

called forth to execute the King's great Deſign of deſtroying every Power that ſtood in Oppoſition to his dearly-beloved Supremacy. Under theſe Terrors the Clergy of the Province of *Canterbury* made their Submiſſion; and, in their Addreſs to the King, he was called *the Protector and ſupreme Head of the Church of* England; but ſome excepting to that, it was added, *in ſo far as it is agreeable to the Law of Chriſt.* This was ſigned by nine Biſhops, fifty Abbots and Priors, and the greateſt Part of the lower Houſe. And though, as I obſerved before, the Convocation of *York* ſtood out upon account of the Words *Head of the Church*, which they ſaid could belong to none but Chriſt himſelf; yet they were quickly convinced, by a Letter of Expoſtulation from the King himſelf, that it was a dangerous Thing for them to pretend to be wiſer than their Betters; and they accordingly made their Submiſſion, which was the more welcome, becauſe with it they paid the Sum of 18840*l.* for his Majeſty's Pardon and Protection, which was accordingly granted. The immediate Conſequence of this Submiſſion was the King's Claim to fill up all vacant Sees by his own ſingle Authority, and forbidding the Clergy to meet and act in a Synodical Way without a Royal Mandate, under the Pain of a *Premunire.*

* King *John*, in the ſixteenth Year of his Reign, 1215, with the common Conſent of his Barons, granted a Charter, "That all Cathedral Churches "and Convents ſhould be free in the Election of "their Prelates, ſaving to himſelf and his Heirs the "Cuſtody of vacant Churches and Monaſteries, and

* Mat. Paris, *p.* 921.

" that he will not hinder them any manner of ways " from chooſing a new Paſtor upon a Vacancy, pro- " vided that they firſt crave Leave of him and his " Heirs to proceed to an Election (from whence " came the Uſe of the *Conge d'elire)* which he pro- " miſes he will not deny or defer: And if it be denied " or deferred, that then the Electors may neverthe- " leſs proceed to a canonical Election." But, after the Election, his Approbation muſt be aſked, which he alſo promiſes ſhall not be denied, without good Reaſon alledged and proved. This Charter was afterwards confirmed by *Magna Charta*, and many ſucceeding Parliaments. By the Tenor of this Charter, the Chapter was not obliged abſolutely to chooſe the Perſon whom the King ſhould nominate or recommend to them, nor yet the King to approve the Election made by them. This occaſioned divers Controverſies betwixt the King and the Church, which cauſed frequent Appeals to *Rome*, which was ſtill looked upon as the *dernier Reſort* in all ſuch Controverſies, as appears from the Election of an Archbiſhop, in the room of *Stephen Langton*, and of a Biſhop of *Wincheſter*, upon the Death of *Peter de Rupibus* *, and divers other Inſtances of the like Nature. And in ſome Caſes, where the King and Chaper had no Difference, the Pope would either annul the Election, or elſe take no notice at all of it, and confer the Biſhopric on the ſame Perſon by his own Authority, and this he called *providing for the Church.* So that for ſome Ages we had few Biſhops that did not poſſeſs their Sees by virtue of theſe Papal Proviſions, not-

* Mat. Paris, 350, 372.

with-

withſtanding the many repeated Statutes againſt this intolerable Uſurpation: But King *Henry* VIII. made ſhort Work, and cut the Knot at once. An Act of Parliament paſſed in the 25th Year of his Reign, that at every Avoidance of an Archbiſhopric or Biſhopric within this Realm, or any other of the King's Dominions, the King may ſend to the Prior and Convent, or Dean and Chapter of the Place which ſhall be void, a Licence under the Great Seal to proceed to an Election of an Archbiſhop or Biſhops of the See ſo being void, with a Letter miſſive, with the Name of the Perſon whom they ſhall elect and chooſe, which Perſon they are to elect and chooſe, and no other. And in caſe they defer the Election above twelve Days after the Receipt of the ſaid Licence and Letters miſſive, then the King ſhall nominate, by his Letters Patent, ſuch a Perſon to the ſaid Office and Dignity as he ſhall think able and convenient for the ſame. And the King ſhall appoint the Archbiſhop, with two other Biſhops; and if there be no Archbiſhop, then four Biſhops, to conſecrate and inveſt the Perſon ſo nominated and elected. And if the Prior and Convent, or Dean and Chapter, proceed not to Election within the time limited, or neglect to certify the Archbiſhop of the Election, if it be a Biſhop, or the King, if it be an Archbiſhop, within twenty Days after the Receipt of the King's Licence; or if any Archbiſhop or Biſhop ſhall refuſe to conſecrate the Perſon ſo elected or nominated, after ſuch Election or Nomination is ſignified to them by the King's Letters Patent; or if any of them, or any other Perſon, ſue, procure, or obtain any Bulls, Letters, or other things from the See of *Rome* upon that Occaſion, or do any thing contrary

contrary to this Act, he shall incur the Dangers, Pains, and Penalties of the *Statute of Provision and Premunire*, made in the 25th Year of King *Edward* III.

In the Reign of *Edward* VI. some Persons, who, instead of paring the Nails of the Clergy, were for cutting off their Arms, to prevent their doing Mischief, procured a new Act, intitled, *An Act for Election, and what Seals and Stiles shall be used by spiritual Persons*; which passed *Nem. Con.* to this Effect, That the *Conge d'elire*, and the Election pursuant to it, being but a Shadow, since the Person was named by the King, should cease for the future; and that Bishops should be named by the King's Letters Patent, and thereupon should be consecrated, and should hold their Courts in the King's Name, and not in their own, excepting only the Archbishop of *Canterbury*'s Court, and they were to use the King's Seal in all their Writings, except Presentations, Collations, and Letters of Orders, in which they might use their own Seals. The Contrivers of this Act, it is plain, designed nothing less than the intire Destruction of the Episcopal Authority, by making them nothing more than the King's Ministers, a sort of Ecclesiastical Sheriffs, to execute the King's Will, and disperse his Mandates, insomuch that they had not the Power of conferring Orders, but as they were thereunto empowered by special Licence. I have been shewn a Copy of such a Licence, but of what Authority I cannot tell. *The King to —— greeting. Whereas all and all manner of Jurisdiction, Ecclesiastical as well as Civil, flows from the King, as from the supreme Head of all the Body*, &c.—*We therefore give and grant to thee full Power*

Power and Licence to continue during our good Pleaſure, for holding Ordination within the Dioceſe of N—, *and for promoting fit Perſons unto Holy Orders, even to that of the Prieſthood.* Whether this be genuine, I know not. Biſhop *Burnet*, who mentions the preceding Act, takes no notice of this new Regulation, only ſays in general, that the Office of Ordination was altered, without entering into the particular Alterations. Theſe Changes being thought, by Queen *Mary*, not only a dangerous Diminution of the Epiſcopal Power, but an odious Innovation in the Church of Chriſt, were repealed in the firſt Year of her Reign, leaving the Biſhops to depend upon their former Claim; and to act in all things that belonged to their Juriſdiction in their own Names, and under their own Seals as in former Times; in which State they have continued from that time to this, without any legal Interruption.

Many Attempts have been made, and Propoſals and Reaſons offered, for reducing the preſent Power of the Epiſcopate, as being yet too high; but ſurely they need no greater Reſtrictions than they are under already by the above-mentioned Act of *Henry* VIII. with regard to Elections. For the Dean and Chapter are allowed to make no manner of Exceptions to the Perſon nominated by the King, but muſt neceſſarily elect him within the Time limited: Neither may the Archbiſhop or Biſhops make any manner of Objection againſt him; but are obliged to proceed to Conſecration. Nay, they are not permitted to delay this a few Days, that they may with all humble Submiſſion repreſent the Unfitneſs of the Perſon recommended

mended to the higheſt Office of the Church, under the Penalty of a *Premunire*.

Having thus far conſidered the ſeveral Steps by which this Act of Submiſſion was obtained, let us conſider a little who they were that ſigned it, and how far their Succeſſors, the reformed Clergy of the Church of *England*, ought, in Equity and Conſcience, to be obliged or affected by it. The Convocation who ſigned it were Popiſh Clergy, who had really incurred the Laſh of a *Premunire*, as the Letter of the Law then ſtood; and well knowing the Temper of their Monarch, and having no Inclinartion to Martyrdom, thought it their wiſeſt Way to make the beſt Compoſition they could for their Lives and Liberties: And the Act of Supremacy was grounded upon it; for they had, in both Convocations of the twenty-ſecond and twenty-fifth of *Henry* VIII. acknowledged him to be the ſupreme Head of the Church within his own Dominions; and, in conſequence of theſe extraordinary Steps, Biſhop *Bonner* took out a Commiſſion for his Biſhopric; as Archbiſhop *Cranmer* did afterwards in *Edward* IVth's Time; a Copy of which is inſerted in Biſhop *Burnet*'s Hiſtory of the Reformation*; whereby they held their Biſhoprics during the Pleaſure of the King, and owned to derive all their Power, even Eccleſiaſtical, from the Crown, *Velut a ſupremo capite, & omnium infra regnum noſtrum magiſtratum fonte & ſcaturigine.* And ſeveral others did the ſame. But how could any Acts of this Nature be binding to their Succeſſors! The Clergy of the

* *Burnet*'s Hiſt. Reform. *p.* 2. Collect. Record. to Book I, *n.* 2. *p.* 90.

Church of *England*, a ſingle Member of the Catholic Church, could, neither for themſelves nor their Succeſſors, give up thoſe inherent Rights, which were derived to them from their Head, as eſſential to the whole Body; and could no more make a new Head than they could make a new Body. Whatever ambitious Views the King might have in getting theſe Acts paſſed (for his Vanity was equal to his Cruelty) yet when thoſe about him came to reflect in cool Blood upon the Inconſiſtencies and Abſurdities of theſe Proceedings, they were aſhamed of them, and, by After-Explanations and Conceſſions endeavoured to ſoften the apparent Hardſhip which was thereby laid upon the Clergy; which I believe our firſt Reformers, in the Height of their Zeal againſt Popery, never intended. Thus, in the Commiſſion which *Cranmer* took for his Archbiſhopric, there is an Exception, *Præter & ultra eaquæ tibi ex ſacris literis divinitus commiſſa eſſa dignoſcuntur*, i. e. *Over and above thoſe Powers and Authorities which the Holy Scriptures teſtify are given to thee by God.* Theſe the King did not pretend to grant, but only that which was over and above theſe; that is, the Protection and civil Privileges annexed to their Office by the State. The Eccleſiaſtical Juriſdiction is conſidered as a Court eſtabliſhed by the ſecular Power, and Part of the Laws of the Land: And in this Senſe only can the King's Supremacy *in all Cauſes, and over all Perſons* be reaſonably and conſiſtently underſtood. And accordingly we find, in the ſame Hiſtory of the Reformation *, a Declaration made of the Function and divine Inſtitution of Biſhops

* Ibid. Addend. *n.* 5. *p.* 321.

and

and Prieſts ſubſcribed by the Lord *Cromwell*, the Vicegerent *in ſpiritualibus*, the two Archbiſhops, eleven other Biſhops, and twenty Divines and Canoniſts, declaring, that *the Power of the Keys, and other Church Functions, is formally diſtinct from the Civil Power*, &c.—And * we have there alſo the Judgment of eight Biſhops concerning *the King's Supremacy*, whereof *Cranmer* was firſt, affirming, that *the Commiſſion which Chriſt gave to his Church had no reſpect to Kings or Princes Power*; *but that the Church had it by the Word of God, to which Chriſtian Princes acknowledge themſelves ſubject.* They deny that *the Commiſſion which Chriſt gave to his Church did extend to civil Power over Kings and Princes: They own alſo that the civil Power was over Biſhops and Prieſts, as well as other Subjects, in civil Matters, which the Church of* Rome *did deny.* But they aſſert, that *Biſhops and Prieſts have the Charge of Souls, are the Meſſengers of Chriſt to preach the Truth of the Goſpel, and to looſe and bind Sin*, &c.—*as Chriſt was the Meſſenger of his Father*; which ſurely was independent of all Kings and Powers upon Earth.

So then, as our Laws now ſtand, the Church is wholly independent of the State as to her ſpiritual Powers and Authorities; becauſe our Kings claim no other Eccleſiaſtical Authority than was granted by God to Kings in Holy Scripture; and that was ordinarily no more than a mere civil Power, though exerciſed over Eccleſiaſtical Perſons who are ſubject (as Chriſt himſelf was) to the civil Power in all civil Things, and in Eccleſiaſtical Cauſes too, to puniſh with temporal Pains, as well Blaſphemers, Idola-

* Ibid. Coll. Record. *n.* 10. *p.* 177.

ters,

ters, and Heretics, as Robbers and Murderers; as well the Tranſgreſſors againſt the firſt as the ſecond Table. This was all that was ordinarily done by godly Kings in Scripture; this was the Supremacy given them by God, and no more than this is attributed to our Kings, as is fully expreſſed in the 37th Article, viz. *That only Prerogative which we ſee to have been given always to all godly Princes in Holy Scripture by God himſelf*; *that is, to rule all Eſtates and Degrees committed to their Charge by God, whether they be Eccleſiaſtical or Temporal, and to reſtrain with the civil Sword the ſtubborn and evil Doers.* Theſe are the Words of the Article.

To draw Precedents therefore from any extraordinary Acts of *Moſes*, *David*, or *Solomon*, is a fallacious Way of Arguing; becauſe it is ſaid *ſuch Prerogative and ſuch only* as was ALWAYS given, and to ALL godly Princes, *viz.* to reſtrain with the civil Sword. As to the Objection that *David* ordered the Courſes of the Prieſts and *Levites*, and *Solomon thruſt out Abiathar from being a Prieſt of the Lord*, 1 Kings ii. 27. they were extraordinary Acts of extraordinary Perſons. *David* and *Solomon* were both inſpired Perſons. The one a Prophet the other a Preacher; and whatſoever they did by an extraordinary Commiſſion from God, is no Precedent for the ordinary Power of Kings. Otherwiſe Kings may take upon them to preach, and to conſecrate Churches; becauſe *Solomon* conſecrated the Temple, and called himſelf a Preacher, they may conſecrate Biſhops, becauſe *Moſes* conſecrated *Aaron*; nay, they may write Scripture for us becauſe they did ſo. Theſe extraordinary Caſes, therefore, prove nothing as to the ordinary Exerciſe of Juriſdiction, and

and are no Manner of Argument for the ordinary Eccleſiaſtical Power in Princes, though their civil Power may be exerciſed upon Eccleſiaſtical Perſons, and in Eccleſiaſtical Cauſes. This was made in Explanation of the Oath of Supremacy, and is a ſufficient warrant to underſtand thoſe Words in that Oath, where the King is ſaid *to be ſupreme Governor as well in all ſpiritual and Eccleſiaſtical Things or Cauſes as temporal*, to extend only to his civil Government, and the Power of the civil Sword. And this Explanation was made neceſſarily; for as Biſhop *Burnet* tells us *, the Biſhops oppoſed the Queen's Supremacy as ſet forth in that Oath, and many others were offended at it. And therefore Queen *Elizabeth* laid aſide the Title of *Head of the Church*, and inſtead of it uſed the word *Governor*, which is in uſe to this Day. This Article mentions Queen *Elizabeth*'s Injunctions, which explain and limit the Legal Supremacy in the ſame manner. The Lord Primate *Uſher* gave the ſame Explanation of it in a Speech at the Council-Table at *Dublin*, upon the Occaſion of ſome Magiſtrates refuſing to take it; and King *James* I. ſent him a Letter of Thanks and Approbation of his Speech, both which are publiſhed. And none of our ſucceeding Kings or Parliaments have given any other Explanation of it, or required it to be taken in any other Senſe. And theſe 39 Articles are incorporated into our Laws, and required to be ſubſcribed by Act of Parliament. Whatever extraordinary Schemes therefore might be laid, and extraordinary Meaſures taken in the Reign of *Henry* VIII. they are all annulled by theſe later Ex-

* Ibid.. Part II. *p.* 386.

planations,

planations, which are confirmed by Act of Parliament; from whence it is plain, that as our Law now ſtands, the Church is left wholly independent of the State, as to her purely ſpiritual Power and Authority.

And as the original Rights of the Church are here aſſerted to be independent of the civil Power; ſo likewiſe her Authority in her ſpiritual Capacity is ſtrongly aſſerted over all her Subjects, the King himſelf not excepted: So as not only to debar him the Prayers and Sacraments, but to proceed to Excommunication, *if other Methods prevail not to bring him to open Penance for open Scandals.* Theſe are the Words in the ſecond Part of the Homily, *Of the right Uſe of the Church*; where after having ſpoken of Chriſt's ſcourging the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple, theſe Words follow: *And according to the Example of our Saviour Chriſt, in the Primitive Church, which was moſt holy and godly, and in the which due Diſcipline was uſed againſt the wicked, open Offenders were not ſuffered once to enter into the Houſe of the Lord, or admitted to common Prayer and the Uſe of the Holy Sacraments with other true Chriſtians, until they had done open Penance before the whole Church. And this was practiſed not only upon mean Perſons, but alſo upon rich, noble, and mighty Perſons, yea, upon* Theodoſius, *that puiſſant and mighty Emperor, whom, for committing a grievous wilful Murder, St.* Ambroſe *Biſhop of* Milan *reproved ſharply, and did alſo excommunicate the ſaid Emperor, and brought him to open Penance.* Upon theſe Words, there is a marginal Note to ſoften the Severity of this Sentence, *viz. That he was only debarred from the receiving the Sacrament, till by Repentance he might be better prepared.*

But if this were all, both the Hiſtorians * *Sozomen* and † *Theoderet*, who relate the Story in very ſtrong and particular Language, and the Compilers of our Homilies muſt have been ſtrangely miſtaken. But let who will comment upon theſe Words, they are confirmed by a competent Authority, and every Clergyman in the Nation obliged by Act of Parliament to ſubſcribe them as a Part of the 39 Articles of Religion. And as they ſtand to this Day unrepealed, they are a ſufficient Explanation of the Senſe both of Church and State in this Matter. And theſe original Rights have been thought and aſſerted by ſome of our moſt eminent Divines to be (as they certainly are) ſo eſſential to the very Being of a Church, that they are not to be alienated or invaded without Sacrilege by any Power upon Earth. The late Dr. *Sherlock*, the learned Dean of St. *Paul*'s, in his *Summary of the Controverſy betwixt us and the Church of* Rome, ſays very emphatically, *p.* 219, *If Biſhops will not exerciſe that Power which Chriſt hath given them, they are accountable to their Lord for it: But they cannot give it away neither from themſelves nor their Succeſſors; for it is theirs only to uſe, not to part with it; and therefore every Biſhop may reaſſume ſuch Rights, though a general Council ſhould give them away, becauſe the Grant is void in itſelf.* And theſe we humbly preſume are the real Sentiments of every Biſhop in *England*.

Well! ſay you, and what of all this? Why then the juſt and natural Concluſion is plainly this, That if the preſent contemptible State of the Clergy, and, conſequently of Religion, be principally owing to the

* Eccleſ. Hiſt. *p.* 316. † Ibid.

Suſ-

Suſpenſion of theſe original, inherent Privileges of the Church; I mean, *the Right of chooſing their own Governors, and of meeting together in Synods to conſult and make Laws for the better Government of the Society*; the only Way to remove the Effect, would be to remove the Cauſe, and reſtore to them the Exerciſe of thoſe Powers, of which they have (injudiciouſly at leaſt ——— to ſay no worſe) been deprived. Biſhop *Burnet*, in a *Defence of his Hiſtory of the Reformation*, has this Remark on the Act of Supremacy: * *If the Letter of the Law, or the Stretches of it, have carried this farther, (viz.* than Queen *Eliſabeth*'s Explanation) *we are not at all concerned in it; but in caſe any ſuch Thing were made out, it would amount to no more than this, that the Civil Authority had made ſome Incroachments on the Eccleſiaſtical Authority; but the ſubmitting to an Oppreſſion, and bearing it, till ſome better Times may deliver us from it, is no Argument againſt our Church.* And again †, *We may ſee in* Godeau, *and many other modern Writers, how much they complain of this as a Servitude, under which the* Gallican *Church is brought, and an Infraction of all the antient Canons.* And again ‡, ſpeaking of the Act of Submiſſion, he ſays, *The Clergy did not bind themſelves never to meet without the King's Writ: They only ſaid, The Convocation had ever been, and ought always to be, aſſembled by the King's Writ; but it doth not bind them up from meeting, in caſe the Neceſſities of the Church require it, and that the King refuſes his Writ.* In which the learned Biſhop plainly intimates, that,

* Defence of Hiſt. Reform. Amſterdam. 1688. *p.* 20.
† *P.* 21. ‡ *P.* 54.

from the Beginning, Things were not as they are now, and hopes that in due time they who have it in their Power will be diſpoſed to reſtore what they unwarrantably detain, and ſettle every Branch of Eccleſiaſtical Authority upon the Foot of Primitive Chriſtianity.

You will ſay, perhaps, you ſee no manner of Occaſion to expect or hope for ſuch a Change; that Things are in very good Hands already. I intirely agree with you that they are, and hope we ſhall never ſee them in worſe. You will tell me, as you have often done, that we have had as excellent a Set of Biſhops ſince the Reformation as ever we had before it. I confeſs it —— and impute it to the particular Bleſſing of Heaven, which has given us a Succeſſion of gracious and religious Princes, who have made it their chief Concern to act agreeably to their glorious Character of *Defenders of the Faith.* But as it has been ever thought good Policy to guard againſt the moſt remote Dangers; ſo we ſhould think it an unſpeakable Addition to our preſent Happineſs to have theſe Points ſo effectually ſecured, that it ſhould never be in the Power of a weak or a bad Prince to employ to the Ruin of Religion thoſe Powers that have ſo long been wiſely and happily exerted for its Preſervation. Had the late King *James* ſat long enough upon the Throne, it is not to be doubted but he would have filled all the vacant Sees with Men of his own Principles, whom, it is much to be feared, the ſeveral Chapters would have elected without Oppoſition. There is a ſtrange Faſcination in Royal Favour, and *the Wrath of the King is as the Roaring of a Lion.* And no wonder, if Men,

who have not the Spirit of Martyrdom, are either wheedled or terrified into a Compliance with the moſt extraordinary Meaſures of an arbitrary Prince. — But you will ſay, ſufficient Care has been taken by the Legiſlature to prevent the Return of ſuch a Danger, by unqualifying any Popiſh Prince from inheriting the Imperial Crown of theſe Realms. True! but this is not the only Danger to which we are expoſed. The beſt of Men, the greateſt of Princes are mortal; and as the beſt and wiſeſt of Men cannot foreſee whether his Heir ſhall be a wiſe Man or a Fool; ſo neither can he know whether he ſhall be a Chriſtian or an Infidel, a Catholic or an Heretic. And this we may depend upon, that whatever Prince has the Power of filling the great Vacancies of the Church, will always take care to prefer People of his own Way of Thinking, and they of courſe will do the ſame with thoſe below them, to the Diſhonour of God, the Scandal of Religion, and the unavoidable Detriment of Church and State. And if, in the Beginning of ſuch an Attempt, the orthodox and faithful Clergy, who ſee the Approach of Infidelity or Hereſy, and would gladly do their beſt to ſtop the Infection, and prevent the Ruin of the Flock, ſhall be forbid under the Penalty of a *Præmunire* to meet and concert proper Meaſures for the Defence and Security of true Religion, the unavoidable Conſequence muſt be an abſolute Apoſtacy from Truth, and Eſtabliſhment of Iniquity and Error, and the Guilt of all that dreadful Train of Conſequences that muſt enſue, will be deſervedly fixed upon them, who did not exert the beſt of their Power to prevent it.

I expect to have it replied, that moſt Men, Princes eſpecially, are too fond of Power to give up any the ſmalleſt Branch, or grant any thing that may ſeem to clip their Prerogative, and eclipſe their Grandeur. But this, methinks, is an aukward Compliment to a *Religious and Gracious Prince.* How can you tell, till you have tried? It will be Time enough to ſit down contented, when, after a decent and proper Application, they ſhall refuſe to reſtore it. It is too ſevere a Reflection upon any Man of Honour, nay, of common Honeſty, to ſuppoſe he would not readily give up any Kind of Poſſeſſion, if he can be convinced that he has no Right to keep it. Now, if the Guides and Keepers of any Prince's Conſcience could convince him upon Catholic Principles, that he is poſſeſſed of any Branch of Power, originally belonging to a diſtinct Authority, we cannot doubt but it would have the ſame Effect, as it had upon the late Queen *Anne.* She, after the Example of her Royal Predeceſſors, had received the firſt Fruits and Tenths of all Eccleſiaſtical Livings, which, having been unjuſtly uſurped by the Pope, as ſupreme Biſhop, were, at the Reformation, with other Branches of Papal Uſurpation, veſted in the Crown. But ſo ſoon as that pious Princeſs was, by proper Application, convinced that they were purely an Eccleſiaſtical Due, ſhe at once remitted them to be applied to the Augmentation of poor Livings; many of which, in the preſent low State of Eccleſiaſtical Revenues, are hardly ſufficient by the moſt frugal Management, to ſupport themſelves and Families from Poverty and Contempt. And why ſhould we deſpair of the ſame Succeſs, if the preſent Caſe were juſtly

and

and fairly repreſented to thoſe whom it may concern, by proper Perſons, and in the moſt decent and dutiful Manner?

You will ſtill ſay, That if the Choice of Biſhops were left to the Epiſcopal College, you ſhould not expect to ſee better Biſhops than have been made by the Crown. Perhaps not; but the Queſtion is about the Matter of Right. You and I perhaps might chooſe as good a Set of Sheriffs or Deputy Lieutenants as we ſee at preſent, but by what Authority? All Kinds of Authority ſhould run in their proper Channel; and there can no Manner of Reaſon be aſſigned, why one Branch of the Legiſlature ſhould interfere with another, upon the mere Pretence of being better able to execute a Charge that does by no means belong to them. If the Governors and Directors of the *Eaſt-India* Company ſhould, in Defiance of the *South-Sea* Charter, aſſume the Power of electing the Directors of their Company; or *vice verſâ*, upon a vain Preſumption that they could make a better Choice for them than they could make for themſelves: What then?—— I leave you to draw the ridiculous Train of Conſequences that muſt inevitably follow. Or, ſuppoſe the Election for both Companies were, from time to time, to be made by the King and Council, I fancy neither of them would advance a Shilling for prolonging their old Charter, or procuring a new one—— But to return to the preſent Subject: If a *moſt Religious and Gracious* Prince could be convinced in Conſcience, that an Alteration of this Kind were not only a Matter of Duty, but of Intereſt and good Policy; if it could be made appear that the returning this ſacred Truſt into

its proper Channel, would contribute greatly to the Glory of God, the Intereſts of true Religion, the Honour and Security of the Crown, and the Peace and Welfare of the Public, it would be too groſs a Reflection upon the Underſtanding and Juſtice of any Prince to ſuppoſe that he would refuſe to comply with it. And I am ſanguine enough to imagine, that if the Management of this Argument were in better Hands than mine, it might eaſily be made appear to the Satisfaction of every impartial attentive Inquirer. One Conſequence at leaſt will be certain, that it would take off all that Obloquy and Contempt that is unjuſtly poured upon the Clergy, on Account of the Ignorance, baſe Compliances, and Immoralities of ſome of their Members; which (as Matters now ſtand) it is not in their Power to prevent or cure, and fix it only on thoſe who have the Power to do both, and neglect to do it.

I fancy (my dear Friend) you are by this time ſick of the Argument; I mean of my Management of it, and wiſh to ſee an End of it. Come, prithee be eaſy for two Moments; I will treſpaſs upon your Patience but a little longer, as *our Friend George* uſed to tell his Congregation, when he had preached half of them to ſleep. Indulge me a little, whilſt I try if I can make good the following Points at leaſt for your Conviction. 1. That this would contribute greatly to the Glory of God, and Intereſt of true Religion. 2. To the Honour and Intereſt of the Crown. 3. To the Peace and Welfare of the Public.

1. The reſtoring every Branch of Eccleſiaſtical Power into its proper Channel, would contribute greatly

greatly to the Honour of God, and Intereſt of true Religion, which are inſeparable.— That *God is a God of Order*, is the Voice of Nature and Reaſon, iucluded in the very Idea we have of a *perfect Being*; and therefore cannot be the Author of Confuſion. From the beautiful and regular Order of Things in this viſible World, the wiſe Heathens inferred a Neceſſity of an infinitely wiſe and powerful Mind, that contrived, directed, and governed, the Motions of this vaſt Machine. And we may as reaſonably infer, that he has taken no leſs Care for the Conſtitution, Direction, and Government of the moral World than he has of the natural; and that therefore he muſt of Neceſſity have preſcribed and ordered the ſeveral Kinds and Degrees of Authority, the different Ranks and Subordinations of Governors neceſſary for the good Government of the Church, and the great and important Ends of its Inſtitution, of which we can have no poſſible Knowledge, but from the Analogy of Things, and the revealed Will of God. But an Unbeliever that obſerves the preſent unnatural Blending of diſtinct Powers and Confuſion of Characters, would be tempted to conclude that there is nothing more divine in our Church-Eſtabliſhment, than in our City-Charter; eſpecially if he thinks he ſees more Marks of Prudence and Regularity in the Exerciſe of one than of the other; and that therefore all our Pretences to a divine Inſtitution are a Cheat and Impoſition upon Mankind. If we ſhould convince him, from the plain Letter of Scripture, and the uniform Senſe and Practice of Antiquity, that JESUS CHRIST, the firſt Biſhop, had left full and plain Directions for the future Government

of

of his Church; if we ſhould ſhow him particularly what Sort of Authority he had left, and in whoſe Hands he had intruſted the Adminiſtration, and yet could not be able to convince him that we acted agreeably to the Directions of our Charter, as underſtood for the firſt three hundred Years after it was granted; he would ſcarce be perſuaded to think, that we ourſelves believed that divine Authority which we ſo gravely preach to others; or that there was any thing in the whole Affair of a religious Eſtabliſhment, but a ſolemn Farce contrived to keep the ſillier Part of Mankind in Decency and Order, which you and I well know to be the prevailing Opinion among the *Beaux Eſprits* in this as well as other Nations. If a ſober diſcerning Deiſt could be prevailed upon impartially to conſider our original Charter of Incorporation; ſhould he obſerve that the chief Power of chooſing Officers, and enacting Laws for this Society was lodged in quite different Hands than by the ſaid Charter is ſpecified and directed; that inſtead of thoſe Qualifications, indiſpenſibly required by the ſaid Charter for the diſtinct Offices of Society, he ſhould ſee Men promoted, without any Regard to their moral Characters or intellectual Accompliſhments; but purely on Account of ſome little ſecret Services, or ſome private Conſiderations, which both Sides would bluſh to have publicly known: What would not ſuch a Man think! what would he not ſay! And what could we ſay for ourſelves, I mean for thoſe who have Power to rectify Miſtakes, to regulate Diſorders, and reform Abuſes, and yet neglect to do it! The Conſequence muſt be an abſolute Indifference and Contempt of all Religion, and the Subverſion of that Order

Order and good Government that intirely ſubſiſts upon it. And in this,

2. The Honour and Intereſt of the Crown is deeply intereſted.— It is an undoubted Truth, that the beſt and trueſt Security of the Crown is founded in the Conſciences of the Subjects: That neither Force or Cunning are ſufficient to keep Men within the due Bounds of Obedience, if they are not reſtrained by juſt Principles of Duty and Allegiance. If theſe are wanting, the Sons of Violence and Ambition, the Wrong-heads and the Wrong-hearts, will never want Pretences for Murmur and Diſcontent, nor fail to attempt Changes and Revolutions to gratify their Vanity, their Malice, or Reſentment, upon a tolerable Proſpect of Succeſs or Impunity. Whatſoever tends to deſtroy or weaken the Influence of Religion upon the Minds of Men, naturally tends to ſap the very Foundation of Order and Government, and to deſtroy the beſt Support of Royal Power. But the Credit of Religion will always riſe and fall in proportion to the Credit and Intereſt of thoſe whoſe Buſineſs and Office it is to ſupport, adorn, and defend it. If therefore a Prince ſhould ever be ſo miſguided, as to promote ſuch unworthy Perſons, as ſhall diſgrace the ſacred Dignity of their Order, it muſt naturally tend to make Religion itſelf contemptible, and deſtroy all that Influence it ought to have upon the Minds and Conſciences of the People.—— Beſides— The ſuperior Clergy, whoſe exalted Stations give them nearer Acceſs to the Throne, may be conſidered as a Bench of ſpiritual Counſellors, Champions for Religion, Guardians and Advocates for the inferior Clergy. But if ever thoſe

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ſacred Offices ſhould be conferred purely as the Reward of a Train of obſequious Services to a Court, there would be but little Reaſon to expect that ardent Zeal in Defence of Religion, that unbiaſſed Integrity upon a trying Queſtion, that undaunted Oppoſition to prevailing Vices and Errors, and that inviolable Attachment to the real Intereſt of their Prince and Country, which ought to be the diſtinguiſhing Characters of thoſe exalted Stations. And becauſe the Condition of moſt Princes is ſuch, that they cannot ſo eaſily enter into the real Characters of the Croud of Expectants on ſuch Occaſions, they will often be compelled to depend upon the Characters and Recommendations of thoſe about them, who (it is to be feared) may not always be guided by ſuch direct uncorrupted Views, as to recommend purely for the Sake of real and ſuperior Merit. And if a Prince be thus miſled by others, though it may in ſome Degree alleviate the Guilt, yet will it not prevent the unhappy Conſequences of ſuch unworthy Promotions. The Weight of Government, even in temporal Affairs, is a heavy Burden, ſufficient to employ the Time, the Attention, and Abilities of the greateſt and wiſeſt Prince upon Earth; and which, without the immediate Aſſiſtance of the ſupreme Being, (I often think) could never be executed as it ought to be. *Solomon* thought ſo, who was himſelf a great and a wiſe King, when he tells us, that by (Divine) *Wiſdom Kings reign, and Princes decree Juſtice.* The Author of the Book of *Wiſdom*, denounces heavy Judgments on thoſe who make an unrighteous Uſe of their civil Power. *Hear, O ye Kings, and underſtand; learn ye, that be Judges of the Ends*

Ends of the Earth; give ear ye that rule the People, and glory in the Multitude of Nations: For Power is given you of the Lord, and Sovereignty from the most Highest, who shall try your Works, and search out your Counsels, because being Ministers of his Kingdom, you have not judged aright, nor kept the Law, nor walked after the Counsel of God, horribly and speedily shall he come upon you; for a sharp Judgment shall be to them that are in high Places, for Mercy shall soon pardon the meanest; but mighty Men shall be mightily punished. For he which is Lord over all shall fear no Man's Person, neither shall he stand in awe of any Man's Greatness: For he hath made the Small and the Great, and careth for all alike, but a sore Trial shall come upon the Mighty. Unto you, therefore, O Kings, do I speak, that ye may learn Wisdom, and not fall away. Wisd. vi. 1. Now if so severe an Account shall be given for the Exercise of temporal Power and civil Authority, which is the Prince's peculiar Province, methinks it should neither be consistent with Policy or Prudence to add to his Burden, by taking to himself a Branch of Jurisdiction, to which he has no direct or immediate Call, and making himself thereby responsible for all the Abuses of Ecclesiastical as well as Civil Authority. All Princes find themselves constrained by the Necessities of Government, to divide the Exercise of their Royal Power, by calling in the Assistance of proper Ministers to act under them in the several distinct Branches of the Administration; as the Army, the Fleet, the Finances, the Courts of Justice. So, we humbly conceive, it would be no small Ease to temporal Princes to devolve the Care of Ecclesiastical Affairs upon the Episcopal College, whose

whoſe peculiar Province it was thought to be in the firſt and pureſt Ages, to provide for the Neceſſities of the Church, or at leaſt (after the Example of the late King *William*) upon a ſelect Commiſſion of Biſhops appointed for that Purpoſe; eſpecially conſidering (as I ſhall hereafter endeavour to ſhew) that no real Advantage either to Church or State, no real Purpoſes of Government are ſerved by the preſent Method.

And now if it does appear that the Glory of God, the Intereſts of true Religion, and the Honour and Security of the Crown, would be moſt effectually ſecured by ſuch a Diſpoſition of Things, it muſt,

3*dly*, follow, That it will greatly contribute to the Peace and Welfare of the Public; for theſe three Articles are inſeparably united in the natural Courſe and Order of Things. Where the Principles of true Religion are duly taught, believed, and practiſed, and all due Submiſſion and Obedience to temporal Princes and Governors are paid upon Principles of Conſcience; there ſeems to be little room left for Diſcord and Confuſion; all is Harmony, Order, and Peace.—But you will ſay, perhaps, that I am arguing upon a chimerical Suppoſition of a State of Things not to be found in any Nation of the World: For that, in all Chriſtian Countries, the Eccleſiaſtical Supremacy and Juriſdiction is veſted either in the Pope or the civil Magiſtrate, or divided betwixt both, as it is particularly in *France*. It may be ſo; nor can I, upon my own Knowledge, diſprove it; but I am informed, that the Kingdom of *Sweden* is an Exception. That the Reformation there, after all the violent Struggles and irregular Steps taken on both Sides, before the grand

Design should be effected, was at last settled upon the foot of primitive Episcopacy. That the King is perfectly absolute in all civil Affairs, yet leaves the Church intirely free in the Exercise of her spiritual Powers, particularly the Election of Bishops, in which he intermeddles not at all. And I have somewhere read or heard a remarkable Story of the late heroic King *Charles* XII. His Father, upon his Death-bed, had desired him, that, upon the Death of the Archbishop of *Upsal*, the only Archbishopric in that Kingdom, he would use his Endeavour to have one particular Bishop, whom he named, and whom he much admired for his Learning and Piety, to be chosen in his room. Accordingly the young King exerted all his Interest for him; but the Bishops, well aware of the Consequence of accepting such Recommendations, rejected him, and chose another. This the religious Hero was so far from taking ill, that he excused himself, on account of his Father's dying Request, for medding at all in a Matter did not concern him. All wise Societies know the Danger of admitting the Recommendation of Superiors in the Choice of their Members, but especially their Governors, and prudently guard against the certain ill Consequences that must unavoidably follow. And the good Effects of that Agreement are very remarkable in that Kingdom; for they have there no Dissenters from the established Church of any kind, which is no small Advantage to the civil Government: In the next place, there always subsists an intire good Harmony betwixt the Church and State. The sacred and civil Powers are kept, as they are in their own Nature, intirely distinct and independent, and so can never interfere; and where

where there is no Clashing, there must needs be an uninterrupted Harmony and Peace: And both Sides find their Account in it, from the mutual Exchange of spiritual and temporal Benefits. The Church makes it her utmost Care to inculcate Principles of Loyalty and Obedience to the civil Government, with a peculiar Authority over the Consciences and Affections of the People; and the King takes care to protect and defend the Church, which he knows to be the best Support of his regal Authority. These are, and ever will be, the natural Consequences of this natural Course and Order of Things.—Whereas the *Erastian* Scheme, wherever it prevails, is a perpetual Source of Jealousy and Contention, is big with Absurdities too gross to be justified, and with Consequences too terrible to be thought of, and too dangerous to be neglected.

Betwixt interfering Powers and clashing Interests, there must of necessity be perpetual Jealousies and Competitions. A King, who is fond of Power, and happens to have a very moderate Concern for Religion, and the Interest of the Church, (which is neither an impossible nor an invidious Supposition; for what has been may be) will be apt to look with a jealous Eye upon the most justifiable and legal Method of defending the one, and securing the other, as an Affront to his Crown and Dignity, and an Encroachment upon his Prerogatives: He will be apt to interpret the most dutiful Remonstrance into Disaffection and Treason, as the late King *James* did to the Fellows of *Magdalen College*. On the other hand, the Friends of the Church cannot help thinking, that the full Extent of Royal Power in the Government of the Church

Church is an Incroachment upon her original and inherent Rights, and are therefore under perpetual Fears and Jealouſies, that one extraordinary Step may produce another; and that thoſe who have already exceeded the due Bounds of civil Authority, may determine to ſecure their Acquiſitions, by ſuppreſſing every thing that may ſtand in their Way, and, inſtead of being *Defenders of the Faith*, and *nurſing Fathers* to the Church, may encourage or connive at thoſe who are contriving the Subverſion of both. Now let any impartial Man conſider what an unhappy Influence ſuch a Train of Jealouſies muſt have upon the Peace and Welfare of a Nation; it naturally tends to weaken and deſtroy that mutual Confidence which ought to ſubſiſt betwixt the Prince and People, and which is one of the ſtrongeſt Securities of any Government; and when that once comes to be diſſolved, all tends to Ruin and Confuſion: The beſt and moſt laudable Deſigns are ſuſpected, and the moſt innocent Actions miſinterpreted on both Sides. Neither Promiſes nor Oaths are believed or truſted, and neither Side can think themſelves ſafe but in the intire Suppreſſion and Subjection of the other. The leaſt Knowledge in Hiſtory will inform us, that this has been the Ground of many terrible Conteſts betwixt the Church and the Prince, eſpecially where he happens to be of a different Communion from the eſtabliſhed Church, and yet muſt have the Diſpoſal of Biſhoprics, and other Affairs of the Church, under his abſolute Direction; can ſet up Eccleſiaſtical Commiſſions in what Hands he pleaſes, hinder Convocations from ſitting and acting, and what not? Of which we have ſeen too many Inſtances at home, as well as abroad, eſpecially in

France, in the Case of *Henry* IV. Nay, and in many Cases where the Prince has been truly and zealously of the established Communion, terrible Consequences have followed upon those mutual Jealousies of any unreasonable Stretch of improper Authority. Witness the *holy League* against *Henry* III. of *France*, and the solemn League and Covenant (which was thence transcribed almost *verbatim*, *mutatis mutandis)* against our King *Charles* I. and the several Squabbles and Disputes betwixt Popes and secular Princes, about dividing the Spoil of Ecclesiastical Power.

The gross Absurdities that flow from this unnatural Blending of Powers and Confusion of Characters, are a sufficient Proof that this is not a natural uncorrupted State of Things; for to reason *ab absurdo*, has always been thought good Logic upon any Question. If Kings have this absolute Supremacy over the Church in their Dominions, how came they by it? If it be the inherent Privilege of the Crown, then it will follow that the heathen Princes before *Constantine* had the same Right to it that he and his Christian Successors had afterwards. And that the Head and the Body should be animated by two opposite Spirits; and that the former should (contrary to the very original Law of Nature) attempt to destroy the latter, is too absurd to be imagined. But if Kings claim it as the Reward and Privilege of their being Christians, that is Members of Christ's holy Catholic Church, another Absurdity will follow, that the same Person can be at the same time the Head and a Member of the same Body. The greatest Prince upon Earth is admitted into the Church by the same Sacrament of Baptism, as any other private Christian, and is

is thereby, as our Office of Baptism expresses it, engrafted into the Body of Christ's Church; and that the new incorporate Member should immediately change its Nature and Position, and become the Head of that Body, requires a particular Philosophy to explain or comprehend. Besides, a Prince who is incorporated into the Church by Baptism, and is, by this way of Reasoning, become its Head, may turn Heretic, as *Constantius* and *Valens*; or Apostate, as *Nero* and *Julian*; and how can he be the Head of any Church with which he has no Communion? Or how can any King be Head of the several different Communions of Christians that may be tolerated in his Dominions? At this rate the Kings of *Great-Britain* are Heads of the Episcopal Church of *England*, of the Presbyterian Church of *Scotland*, and the Popish Church of *France*, if they had the Possession as well as the Title of it. They may indeed be the Heads of an hundred different Churches or Communions, if there were so many in their Dominions, as to the civil or temporal Supremacy, and Exercise, of the civil Sword *in all Causes, and over all Persons, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil.* But to be the Ecclesiastical Heads and Governors, or to have any Ecclesiastical Power or Authority, is utterly inconsistent, and as great a Contradiction, as that all these Churches, Communions, or spiritual Corporations should be one. They are all one Body in the temporal Sense; they are all Subjects, and so have all one temporal Head, or Governor; but they cannot all have one Ecclesiastical Head, or Governor, any more than they can be all one Ecclesiastical Body, or more than the same Person can

be at the ſame time the ſpiritual Head of ſeveral diſtinct Churches or Communions.

And as the Notion is in itſelf abſurd and contradictory, ſo nothing but a Miracle can prevent the unhappy Conſequences that will one time or other naturally flow from the Practice; of which I ſhall mention three. The *firſt*, is the utter Diſcouragement of ſound Learning, ſincere Piety, Contempt of the World, unfeigned Zeal for the Honour of God and true Religion, which are the neceſſary Qualifications for the Apoſtolical Office. So long as it ſhall be in the Power of a Court to diſpoſe of all the great and honourable Employments in the Church, it will be a conſtant Temptation to worldly and deſigning Men to recommend themſelves, by all the little Arts of Flattery and Addreſs, to the Notice and Eſteem of thoſe who have the ſole Power to prefer them. And as it is morally impoſſible for any Prince to enter into the real Characters of the ſeveral Expectants upon every Vacancy, ſo he will be compelled to accept the Characters and Recommendations of thoſe about him, who, in a Nation divided into Parties, will moſt certainly recommend to the Royal Favour none but thoſe who have moſt eminently diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their zealous Attachment to the Intereſt of the prevailing Party; which a Prince of courſe is taught to believe is the Security of his own Royal Perſon and Family, and the Support of his Crown and Dignity. This naturally tends to debauch the Minds, and corrupt the Principles of the Croud of Seekers: They are tempted to deſpiſe and diſregard all thoſe intellectual and moral Excellencies, which are the true and

and only Foundation of real Merit, which they see disregarded by their Superiors, and have recourse to all the mean unworthy Arts of Venality and Prostitution, which they observe to be the most successful Methods of obtaining Preferment; whilst the Learned, the Religious, the Generous, and the Uncorrupt, who cannot come awkwardly to cringe at a Levee, who cannot adjust their Muscles to the Direction of their Patron, nor sacrifice their Understandings and Consciences to every Turn of a Minister, will be sure to fly from those Places, where they are sure to make a disagreeable Appearance, and shut themselves up from the Observation of those, from whom, at best, they can expect nothing but Aversion and Dishonour.

And this cannot fail to produce a *second Consequence*, still more fatal and terrible. I mean the grossest Ignorance and Immorality among the Clergy, and an intire Contempt of Religion among the Laity, which will quickly end in the Confusion and Distraction of Church and State. Bishop *Burnet*, in the forementioned *History of the Regale*, gives us several Instances of the dismal Effects of this unhappy Conduct. To this * he ascribes the intire Overthrow of the *Greek* Church, where it prevailed: *The Emperors*, says he, *took the Nomination of Bishops into their own Hands, and then gave them either to such illiterate Monks, as were much esteemed for the Strictness of their Lives, but were Tools for any Designs on which they set them, or to such of their Courtiers or Soldiers that had merited best at their Hands. And by these Means were*

* P. 75.

the Greek *Churches brought to that pass for Ignorance and Corruption, that it is no Wonder they were given up by God to such terrible Calamities as were brought upon them, first by the* Saracens, *and then by the* Ottoman *Family.* And again he goes on, * *In* Andronicus's *long Reign, many Bishops were put in and out, to the great Scandal of the Church: Of which the Historian* † *makes this Remark, Princes chose such Men to their Charge, who may be their Slaves, and in all things obsequious to what they shall prescribe, who may lie at their Feet, and not so much as have a Thought contrary to their Command. No Wonder* (continues the Bishop) *he brake out into so severe a Censure, when many were raised to that Dignity who could neither write nor read.* Now should we, or our Posterity, be ever so unhappy as to see the Clergy, by these, or any other Means, reduced so low as to be contemptible in the Eyes of the People,

A *third Consequence* will follow.—All the Enemies of Religion, Peace, and Order, who have long looked with a malignant Eye upon the poor Remainder of the Revenues of the Church, and long to devour the poor Pittance that has hitherto escaped the Plunder of the Sacrilegious, will quickly unite to finish the evil Work, which their unbelieving Forefathers began. They will not only aggravate every suspicious Appearance, but even their own malicious Surmises, into a Charge of the highest Infamy and Guilt; and then the Bulk of the People, who can only judge by Appearances and Impressions made by those whom they are taught to believe better Judges

* P. 97. † Nicephor. Greg. L. 7.

than

than themſelves; they will hearken to every Calumny, and ſwallow every idle Tale that may tend to ruin their Credit, and haſten their Deſtruction. This was the Caſe with regard to religious Houſes at the Time of their Diſſolution; the real Abuſes in ſome, which ought to have been reformed, and the imaginary Abuſes in others, which ought to have been impartially examined; the Ignorance, the Luxury, and Immoralities charged in the groſs upon all thoſe religious Societies, raiſed ſuch an outragious Spirit of Reformation in the Bulk of the People, that they readily lent a helping Hand to thoſe who made the Cry of *Reformation* a Pretence and Cloak for the moſt outragious Sacrilege, to the Diſhonour of God, the Reproach of Religion, and irreparable Loſs to good Learning. So at the Beginning of the *great Rebellion*, the real Faults and Indiſcretions perhaps of a few Churchmen were aggravated, by the malicious Artifices of the Factious and Diſcontented, into an abſolute Charge of inſupportable Uſurpation, Tyranny, Idolatry, Perſecution, *&c.*—not only againſt the Perſons, but even the whole Epiſcopal Order; whilſt the Leaders of the Faction had nothing at Heart but Power and Plunder, which they purſued without Shame or Remorſe, to the Ruin of great Numbers of moſt excellent and primitive Perſons, and the utter Subverſion of the eſtabliſhed Church. And ſhould it ever happen, for the Sins of this Nation, that the Ignorance, the looſe Principles, the irregular Conduct, the immoral Lives, of a few Clergymen (who perhaps owe their Promotion purely to their Unworthineſs) ſhould be improved by the Enemies of Religion into a popular Charge and Clamour againſt the whole

Order, you will quickly see the Harpies flying to the Spoil, and the Learned and Religious suffering without Distinction from the lawless Rage of Infidelity and Sacrilege, for the Faults of their unworthy Brethren.

Add to all this, that if there be a God in Heaven, which ruleth over the Kingdoms of the Earth, which you, and I, and every sober Deist, must, upon our own Principles, believe and confess, and which none but a Fool can deny or dispute; it will then follow, that not only private Persons, but Nations and Communities, shall be rewarded or punished, according to their political Merit or Demerit: But in their political Capacity, they can only be rewarded or punished in this World, in which only they can subsist. It is therefore the usual Method of Providence to punish the Wickedness of Princes, the Iniquity of Courts, the Apostacy of the Clergy, and Irreligion of the People, by withdrawing his Protection from them, and delivering them up into the Hands of those whom he has appointed to be the Executioners of his Justice. * *For the Sins of her Prophets, and the Iniquities of her Priests*, was *Jerusalem*, the beloved City, delivered into the Hands of her Enemies, who shed the Blood of the Just in the midst of her, and led her Children into Captivity in an idolatrous Nation. And the present deplorable State of the Eastern Churches, groaning under the Mahometan Tyranny, should be a sufficient Warning to others not to tread in their Steps, for fear of their Punishment.

* Lam. iv. 10.

These

Theſe terrible Conſequences (we humbly preſume) eaſily may, and only can, be prevented by reſtoring the Order and Diſcipline of the Church upon the foot of primitive Antiquity, and the univerſal Practice of the firſt and pureſt Ages, as we find them atteſted by their public Acts and Monuments, which make the Election of their own Governors, and the Power of holding Synods upon proper Occaſions, to be conſidered as her inherent and eſſential Privileges, without which ſhe can neither execute nor preſerve the ſpiritual Authority, with which ſhe is intruſted, nor anſwer the great Ends of her Inſtitution.

Againſt the firſt, many Objections have been, and ſtill will be, made by thoſe who are engaged by Intereſt or Prejudice to oppoſe the moſt reaſonable Alteration. The firſt is, *That the Kings are Founders of all our* Engliſh *Biſhoprics and have therefore the undoubted Right of Patronage, to beſtow them as they pleaſe.* This Objection has been urged by Men of Learning and Character; but without a due Proof of the Fact, or Defence of the Conſequence; neither of which I take to be feaſible. That there were *Chriſtian Biſhops* in *Britain* before there were *Chriſtian Kings*, we preſume, can hardly be diſputed; and whatever Alterations Chriſtian Kings might afterwards make as to the Places of their Reſidence or temporal Endowments, it makes but little Alteration; becauſe we humbly conceive it does not appear by any Endowment now extant upon Record, that any Prince ever ſtipulated in Conſideration of ſuch Endowment, or claimed for himſelf, or his Succeſſors, the Privilege of electing either Biſhop or Abbot, in Exchange for the Temporalities with which he had endowed any

any Biſhopric or religious Houſe in his Dominions. If any ſuch Claim could have been found, it might have been reaſonably expected in *Magna Charta*; where, after due Care had been taken for aſcertaining the Privileges and Immunities of the Church, it is ſcarce to be doubted but that the Prince who granted it would at leaſt have inſerted a *Salvo*, for the Privileges of himſelf and his Succeſſors, in ſo important an Affair as this, in which their Silence may be juſtly conſidered as a Proof that no ſuch Claim was ever made; and that we ſhould, at this time of Day, trump up a Title for them, to which they never made any Pretence, ſhews how much we improve in Civility and good Manners to the Court, to which we owe our Preferments, and how little Regard we have for the Church, whoſe Miniſters we pretend to be, and whoſe Privileges and Immunities we are bound to vindicate.

A ſecond Objection is, That as they are *Lords of Parliament* and Privy-Counſellors, and enjoy many temporal Privileges annexed to their Sees, it is but reaſonable that the King ſhould have the ſole Nomination of them, for the better Security of their Allegiance. To which it may be anſwered, It is highly reaſonable that the Prince ſhould have all poſſible Security for the Loyalty of all his Subjects, of whatever Rank or Condition ſoever, ſpiritual as well as temporal; and that the Biſhops, as well as others, ſhould have ſuch reaſonable Teſts upon them, as may be thought neceſſary for that Purpoſe.—For their Temporalities they do Homage and Fealty to the King, to whoſe Royal Bounty they confeſs them to be intirely owing. Suppoſe, at the ſame time, they were

were in a solemn Manner to renounce all Pretensions to civil Power in the Church; to limit or oppose, by secular Force, the Authority of the civil Magistrate, though in sacred Things, or over sacred Persons; yea, though they should think it unjustly exercised: What more than this could any Prince reasonably expect? If he should, for his further Security, insist upon the absolute Nomination of such Persons, as had, by a long Train of obsequious Services, given him sufficient Proofs of an intire Submission to his Royal Will and Pleasure, he would find at last, by sad Experience, this would in a great measure defeat the only real Benefit he could propose by such a Promotion. Their sacred Characters, as spiritual Guides and Confessors, as well as Privy-Counsellors, would oblige them rather to advise in Matters of Duty and Conscience, than blindly to follow the Direction of their Sovereign, and, like the false Prophet of old *, with one Mouth declare Good to the King, when they see him going into wrong Measures, to the Ruin of himself and his People. A Prince can have little Reason to expect, that they, who have sacrificed their Understandings and Consciences to obtain Preferment, will ever have Courage enough to hazard the Loss of his Favour by a religious Adherence to the Cause of Truth and Justice. A very moderate Degree of Knowledge in the History of our own Nation may convince any Man, that those who have been Tools and Sycophants to obtain Preferment, will run any Lengths, and comply with any Changes, in order to keep what they have got, or obtain what

* 2 Kings xxii. 13.

they

they want, and would prove but miſerable Comforters in a Day of Tryal and Adverſity. Whereas a Perſon choſen to that exalted Station by the unanimous Vote of his Fellow-Biſhops and Clergy, with the Prince's Royal Approbation, for his ſuperior Knowledge, Greatneſs of Soul, and Sanctity of Life, would thereby give him the greateſt Security, that he would ſcorn to miſlead him by his Advice, Approbation, or Silence into all Meaſures, or betray or forſake him in the Proſecution of good ones.

A third Objection, which never fails to be made on this Occaſion, is ſetting up *Imperium in Imperio*; which is a mere Jingle of Words, without any Meaning. A Church abſolutely independent of the State, in Things civil as well as ſacred, would indeed be ſetting up one Power and Government within another, perpetually claſhing and interfering, which, without doubt, would produce nothing but Confuſion. But whilſt the ſacred and civil Powers run each in their proper Channels, they will be like two parallel Lines, that never can meet or interfere, but are perfectly conſiſtent and aſſiſtant to each other. Every Crime is a Violation of the Laws of God, as well as the Laws of the Community. And every Criminal, conſidered as a Member of the Church as well as of the State, is in a different Manner, and on a different Account, reſponſible to two diſtinct Tribunals, the one to puniſh the Body, and the other the Soul. Thus for *Treaſon*, *Theft*, or *Murder*, which are forbidden both by the Laws of God and Man; neither their Sentence nor Abſolutions are at all interfering or inconſiſtent with one another. The Criminal may be

be pardoned by the State, and yet cenſured and excommunicated by the Church; or he may, upon his Repentance, be abſolved by the Church, and yet be puniſhed by the civil Magiſtrate; ſo that both may act independently, yet without Confuſion: The Confuſion ariſes purely from their exceeding the Bounds of their diſtinct Commiſſions; when the Church pretends to control or limit the Exerciſe of the civil Power, or the State to oppoſe and hinder the ſpiritual Authority of the Church. The Papal Uſurpations, therefore were intolerable; for the Biſhops aſſerted the Pope's Power over Princes, even in temporal Things, and, by his Command, refuſed to pay Taxes, or contribute towards the Support of the Government, which was directly withdrawing their Allegiance from the civil Magiſtrate, and ſetting up a foreign Power ſuperior to him in temporal Things, even in his own Dominions.

JESUS CHRIST therefore is the Foundation of the Church; though in ſpiritual Things wholly independent on the civil Power, yet gave her no Authority to claſh or interfere with it. He declared that his Kingdom (and by conſequence theirs) was not of this World. He gave, and commanded to give, to *Ceſar* all that was *Ceſar's*; but the Things of God, and the Adminiſtration of his ſpiritual Kingdom upon Earth, he left in the Hands of his Church, for which ſhe is juſtly accountable to none but himſelf; and from the unnatural Blending of theſe diſtinct Powers ariſes all that pretended Confuſion that is objected to the Exerciſe of an independent ſpiritual Authority.

And after all, we humbly preſume, with the Conſent of our Governors, that a Method might be found out

out to prevent or answer all these Objections, and to restore the Episcopal Rights, without any Prejudice or Diminution to the Royal Authority; so that both the Prince, the Clergy, and the People may have their due Share of Power in the Election, and the Prince may have all the Security he can reasonably desire for the dutiful Allegiance of the Person to be elected. Different Schemes have, in different Ages and Nations, according to the different Circumstances of Things, been proposed and practised for this End. The Council of *Arles*, *A. D.* 450. *Can.* 55. made a Rule, which for many Ages was followed by all the western Churches, among whom the *British* were always reckoned, That, *to avoid Ambition and Simony, the Bishops should name three Persons, out of whom the Clergy and People should choose one.* In the next Century, the Emperor *Justinian* made a Decree * for the eastern Churches, and as much of the Western as was under his Jurisdiction. *That when a Bishop was to be ordained, the Clergy and chief Men of the City should assemble, and having taken an Oath upon the Gospels to make an impartial Choice of three Persons well qualified,* (whose Qualifications are particularly expressed in the Oath) *he of those three Persons should be consecrated whom the Bishops that were to ordain him should judge the most worthy.* Another Expedient has been thought of in later Days, as better suited to the State and Necessities of our Times, *That when any Bishopric is vacant, the Diocesan Clergy should present nine Persons to the Chapter; and that out of them they should present three to the King, of whom he should no-*

* Nov. 123. C. 1, & 137. C. 2.

minate

minate one. One great Objection againſt this Scheme is, That hereby the People are intirely excluded, and the Biſhops have not that Authority in the Election, which in the moſt primitive Times they always had: But there is another which I have heard propoſed, which I think ſeems leſs liable to Objection than any other; *That upon every Vacancy of a Biſhopric, the Convocation ſhould meet and chooſe eight Perſons: The Upper Houſe four, and the Lower Houſe four. Theſe ſhould be preſented to the Parliament: The Upper Houſe ſhould preſent their four to the Lords; the Lower theirs to the Commons: Out of theſe the Lords ſhould preſent two, and the Commons two, to the King; out of which four his Majeſty ſhould nominate one.* By this Method both the Clergy, the People, and the King too, ſhould have a Share in all Elections of Biſhops: There would be no Danger of having undeſerving Perſons preferred to ſo high a Station; and Biſhops, or thoſe who hope to be ſuch, will be encouraged to obtain the Favour of their Country, by ſeeking the true Welfare both of Church and State; ſince there would be no other Way of arriving at that Honour. The only Difficulty in this Scheme is to obtain the Conſent of our Superiors to put it in Practice.

The Objections againſt the *ſecond Branch*, viz. That of meeting in Synods to conſult and determine about Matters purely ſpiritual, to cenſure notorious Heretics, Schiſmatics, and Unbelievers, to condemn profane and irreligious Books and Opinions, determine Controverſies, defend and explain Articles of Faith, *&c.*—are—I profeſs, I know not what. REASONS there certainly are, and ſuch as our Superiors

periors think of ſufficient Weight to juſtify the long Intermiſſion of Convocations; and it would be Preſumption in us to offer at any Conjectures about an Affair in which we are (and we preſume ought to be) intirely ignorant. We do not pretend to claim the Power of convening by virtue of any ſpiritual Authority independent of the State. The Wiſdom and Piety of former Kings have made a ſufficient and legal Proviſion for the Peace and Intereſt of the Church and true Religion by many ſolemn Charters and repeated Acts of Parliament.—Give me leave to tranſcribe a notable Paſſage very appoſite to our preſent Purpoſe, from the late *Pious, Learned, and Honourable Lord* Nottingham's Poſtſcript to his *Letter to Mr.* Whiſton, *The Convocation* (ſays he) *is a Part of the Parliament, and as of right it muſt be ſummoned with the Parliament; ſo that Summons will be rendered inſignificant and nugatory, if they are not permitted to ſit and act in taking care of the Flock of Chriſt, of which the Holy Ghoſt has made them Overſeers, and which the Laws of the Land have committed to them; eſpecially at a Time when the Doctrines of our moſt Holy Faith, and the Apoſtolical Inſtitutions of our Church, are ſo virulently attacked, and in ſo open and inſolent a Manner. It was the Advice of* Mæcenas *to* Auguſtus *to ſuffer no Innovations in Religion; becauſe the Peace of the State depended upon it: that Prince had Peace in all the World: but what Diſturbances, what Miſeries, Innovations in Religion have cauſed in this Nation, the Hiſtory of the laſt Age informs us ſufficiently: and how fatal the Feuds and Animoſities occaſioned by the Pretenders to Religion in this may be, no Man can foretel.— Every good Man fears—. Now whatever ill uſe has been made of the Text for ſuffering the Tares*

Tares which were sown by the Enemy to grow up with the Wheat; yet surely we are not to lay ourselves to sleep on purpose to give the Enemy an Opportunity of sowing them. The Jews *reckon they were forbid even by the Law of* Moses *to revile the Gods of other Nations, which are no Gods: But that the Son of God, whom we and all Christendom adore as the God of our Salvation, should be reviled, trampled upon, and put to open Shame by those of our own Nation, in Contempt of the Laws of the Land, as well as of God, uncontrolled, without any Animadversion, without giving the proper Champions of our Faith an Opportunity to refute and reclaim them from their Errors, is so unaccountable a Proceeding both in Prudence and Religion, that I well hope a speedy Remedy will be applied to it; and that those who are in Authority will free themselves not only from the Suspicion, but from the real Guilt of being Partakers in other Mens Sins. For* Qui non prohibet, cum potest, jubet; *and therefore that they will advise his Majesty to give the Fathers and Pastors of the Church leave to speak for themselves, and indeed for the King. For Defender of the Faith is not an empty Title. The Defence of the Church of* England, *and the holy Religion professed in it, is the Foundation of the Revolution, and of his Majesty's Succession to the Throne. And after all our Experiments, this Church will be found to be, as was said of the Sanctuary, The Excellency of our Strength, and indeed of all the Protestants in* Europe; *who as much as they want our Support, will have little Reason to think we shall be much concerned for them with whom in some Points we differ, if we shew but little Zeal for our common Christianity in which we agree.* I see you stare at this long Quotation. But as this Noble Author was not only a good Christian and a good

Scholar, but alſo a good Lawyer; his Authority in Point of Law may give the greater Weight to his Reaſoning upon the Principles of common Chriſtianity.

The preſent deplorable State of Religion among us is not to be denied or defended. The univerſal, and indeed, unavoidable Relaxation of Church-Diſcipline, and the ſcandalous Abuſe even of that Shadow of it that remains, gives us but a melancholy Proſpect for the growing Generation. There are, it is true, yet to be ſeen in our Rubric and Canons, ſuch Words as *Diſcipline*, *Cenſure*, *Admonitions*, *Penance*, *Excommunication*; ſufficient Indications of a Power once claimed and exerciſed by the Governors of the Church. But alas! they ſtand there now as the melancholy Ruins of an old Fortreſs long ago demoliſhed, uncapable of the leaſt Defence againſt the Enemies of Religion. The Rubric to the Communion-Service directs every Clergyman to admoniſh and repel from the Communion Men of vicious and ſcandalous Lives; and the Churchwardens are bound by their Oaths to preſent ſuch Offenders, that they may be puniſhed. But, conſidering the preſent State of Things, a Man muſt have the Courage of a Martyr, that dares put theſe Laws in Execution.—Suppoſe, for inſtance, that the greateſt Reprobate in this City were for ſome peculiar Kind of Merit preferred to any good Office, Eccleſiaſtical, Military, or Civil; and ſhould offer himſelf to receive the Communion as a Qualification; what in ſuch a Caſe ſhall a Miniſter do? If he admit him, he is falſe to his Canonical Oath; if he refuſe him, he is liable to be ſued in an Action of 500 *l.* which may perhaps be the immediate Ruin of his Family. If not that——

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it expoſes him however to the keeneſt Reſentment of the Perſon ſo refuſed, and by conſequence to the Vengeance of thoſe great Men, who had been the Authors of his Promotion. I remember in the latter End of Queen *Anne*'s Reign ſuch a Caſe as this: The Clergyman, apprehenſive of the Snare, applied himſelf to the Biſhop of his Dioceſe (with whom I was then in Company) how to behave on ſuch a trying Occaſion. O (ſaid the Biſhop) you muſt, without Doubt, follow the Direction of the Canon and Rubric. But, my Lord (ſaid he) I know the Temper of this Man ſo well, that I am ſure he will ſue me; and if he does, he will ruin me.—— I cannot help that (ſaid the Biſhop) the Rubric and Canons are your Rule. But, my Lord! (ſaid he) will you uſe your Intereſt above to indemnify me, in caſe I ſhould be condemned to pay the Penalty? I cannot (ſaid he) promiſe myſelf or you any Succeſs, if I ſhould attempt it. Why then (ſaid he) I muſt comply even againſt my Oath and Conſcience—Let me rather fall into the Hands of a merciful God, than into the Hands of an unbelieving, unforgiving Reprobate. Was not this a hard Caſe! And may not this be the Caſe of every Clergyman in *England!* —— And is there no Remedy!——— Can there be no Medium betwixt Damning and Starving?—— How muſt the Infidels laugh in their Sleeves to hear the learned Writers and Preachers of our Church talk of ſpiritual Authority, the *Power of the Keys*, which every little dirty Fellow in an Office ſhall defy you to execute?——For Shame, let us be conſiſtent; either repeal your Canons or your Acts of Parliament. If you pretend to communicate a ſpiritual Commiſ-

ſion to the Clergy, and oblige them by a ſolemn Oath to execute it, and the whole Office is directed and confirmed by repeated Acts of Parliament; let the Legiſlature, that injoins this Canonical Oath, remove every Obſtacle that may lie againſt it, and find out legal Methods of Protection and Security for thoſe who have Honour and Courage enough to do their Duty, and inforce by the civil Authority all the Obligations of Morality and Religion.

I have often wiſhed that ſome Man of Learning and Leiſure would give us a Compendium of the ſeveral Laws that have been made in all Ages and Nations of the World, ſo far as Hiſtory can inform us, in Behalf of *Virtue*, *Morality*, *Juſtice*, and *Religion*. We ſhould certainly find, that not only among the politer and more learned Nations, ſuch as *Egypt*, *Chaldea*, *Greece*, and *Rome*; but even among the barbarous *Scythians* and *Americans*, it was thought an eſſential Point of good Government to ſecure by wholeſome Laws and ſevere Penalties every Branch of religious Duty to their falſe Gods, and every Article of ſocial Virtue and Juſtice betwixt Man and Man. And that Death or Baniſhment, corporal Pains or civil Incapacity, were the certain Puniſhment of thoſe Crimes in heathen Nations, which, in Chriſtian Countries, are regarded as Inſtances of a *ſuperior Genius*, *politer Taſte*, *more impartial Inquiry and Freedom of Thought*, *innocent Gallantries*, *comical Adventures*, *dextrous Management*, or *ſuperior Cunning*. Upon the whole, we cannot conceive it inconſiſtent with good Policy, and all the Purpoſes of good Government, to ſecure by wholeſome Laws and ſevere Penalties, the Practice at leaſt, if not the Belief, of every

every Article of Natural Religion, and of Revealed too, ſo long as it ſhall be continued as the *Religion of the State*; and that Irreligion and Profaneneſs ſhould be deemed quite as criminal, as Miſdemeanors againſt the civil Government. Where would be the Abſurdity or the Danger of making Blaſphemy againſt God as criminal, as denying or diſputing the King's Title? Why ſhould not the denying the Divinity of the Son of God (which is an Article of the State-Religion, and confirmed by repeated Acts of Parliament) be as heinous as denying the Legitimacy of any of the Royal Iſſue? Why not the profaning a Church, as ſtriking within the Verge of the Court? Why not the Profanation of the Lord's Day, (another Article of State-Religion) as a contemptuous Affront to a State-Holiday? Why ſhould not burleſquing the Bible (which is alſo an Article of the Religion of the State) be deemed as great an Affront to the Government, as the late Powder-Plot againſt the four Acts of Parliament? Why ſhould not Atheiſm and Infidelity be quite as bad as Popery? Why ſhould it be more meritorious to write in Defence of the Miniſtry, than in Vindication of Revealed Religion? Why is it a Crime to be cool and indifferent in Politics, and to be warm and active in Defence of Religion? Are we under fewer or weaker Obligations to fear God, than we are to honour the King? Is it not as much the Duty of Princes (whom we acknowledge to be God's Vicegerents) to promote the Honour and Service of their ſupreme Lord, and the Intereſt of Religion, as to ſecure the Allegiance of their own Subjects, and ſupport the Dignity of their Crowns.——

Now with all due Submiſſion to our Superiors, we humbly conceive, that if a Convocation were ſuffered to meet, and were confined to the Conſideration of proper Remedies for the numberleſs Inſtances of Irreligion and Profaneneſs, which are daily and openly practiſed without Check or Reſtraint, which being approved by the Wiſdom of Parliament, ſhould be enacted into Laws by the Royal Authority; we cannot but think they would contribute as much to the Honour and Intereſt of the Prince, and the Peace and Welfare of the Public, as ſome other Acts which I could mention, which yet were ſollicited with as much Zeal and Application as if the intire Welfare of the Nation had depended upon them.

But you will ſay I am run from my Subject; how will this prevent the Abuſes and Immoralities ſo loudly charged upon the Clergy? Patience, dear Sir, your own ſober Reflections will convince you that this is the proper and only Remedy. A Court influenced by theſe Counſels, and directed by theſe Principles, could not fail to effect an intire Reformation of all thoſe Abuſes which the Enemies of the Clergy now ſo loudly complain of. What can be ſo likely to encourage among them an Emulation to excel, as to find that ſuperior Merit is the only Recommendation to Royal Favour? and that Intereſt will prevail even where a Senſe of Duty cannot, even their worſt Enemies will acknowledge. This would compel them to have Recourſe to all the legal Methods which the Favour of Princes, and the Laws of the Land afford for them, for the better Diſcharge of their great Truſt, and the

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real Purpoſes of Edification and Order. A Convocation thus ſitting under the Royal Protection, and the Favour and Good-will of both Houſes of Parliament, might eaſily extract from the apoſtolical and moſt primitive Canons, ſuch a Compendium of Duty as ſhould be a ſtanding Rule for the moral and ſacerdotal Conduct of all the Clergy, like the Statutes of the two Univerſities, or the Articles of War; the Violations of which ſhould be cognizable and puniſhable by their proper Superiors.

Their proper Superiors, you will tell me, have ſomething elſe to do than to inſpect the particular Conduct of every Clergyman under their Care. We own it; and therefore the Wiſdom of our Forefathers have eſtabliſhed two very neceſſary Offices in the Church for the more regular Exerciſe of Diſcipline, and Preſervation of Order; which, though incorporated into our Laws, have for many Years, and for I know not what Reaſons, been intirely laid aſide, to the great Prejudice of Religion in general, the Decay of Diſcipline, and the Increaſe of Deiſm, Hereſy, and Schiſm; I mean *Suffragan Biſhops* and *Rural Deans*, which wiſe and good Men wiſh to ſee reſtored.

Suffragan Biſhops were the ſame as the *Chorepiſcopi* among the Antients. Biſhops placed in Villages of the larger Dioceſes, ſubject to the Biſhop of the Dioceſe in which the Village was, and could act nothing but by his Licence and Commiſſion. *Du Pin* * tells us, that *Rabænus*, Archbiſhop of *Mentz*, one of the moſt learned Writers of that Age, which was

* Vol. VII. *p.* 164, 165.

the eighth Century, in oppoſition to the Council of *Ratiſbon*, who had degraded them to the Rank of Preſbyters, undertook to prove that their Office was Apoſtolical; and believes that St. *Linius* and St. *Clemens* were Suffragans to St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*. Our learned Biſhop *Beveridge* * gives us a large and particular Account of the Nature and Antiquity of this Office, in which we are not ſo much concerned as in the legal Authority by which this Office was ſettled and regulated in *England*. Mr. *Wharton* † ſays, that the Office was brought into *England*, about the middle of the ſeventh Century, not much above ſixty Years after Chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed among our *Saxon* Anceſtors, and continued to the Reformation. In the 26th of *Hen.* VIII. a Statute was made, that in twenty ſix Places there named, and in no others, Suffragan Biſhops ſhould be appointed, that they ſhould be conſecrated by the Archbiſhop and two Biſhops, but that none of them ſhould exerciſe any Part of the Epiſcopal Office, but ſuch as ſhould be committed to them by the Biſhop of the reſpective Dioceſe. And let any impartial Man judge, whether the reviving this Office would not be of excellent Uſe, eſpecially in the larger Dioceſes, and thoſe immediately ſubject to the Archbiſhops. Some of our Biſhoprics are ſo large, that it is abſolutely impoſſible for one Man to take that Epiſcopal Care of them that is neceſſary. The Dioceſe of *Lincoln* has above twelve hundred Pariſhes, that of *Norwich* near as many. The Biſhops of

* Annot. ad Can. 13. Concil. Ancyran.
† Ang. Sax. Part I. *p.* 150.

Cheſter

Chester and *Exeter* have very large Dioceses; so has the Archbishop of *York*, besides the Care of a Province. But be the Diocese ever so small, the necessary Attendance upon Parliament obliges the Bishops to be at least one half Year absent from their Dioceses; during which Time, they may not improperly be said to be left as Sheep without a Shepherd, which is no small Misfortune and Discouragement to the Parochial Clergy, who are so far from the Inspection, the Advice, and Countenance of their Superiors, upon very many trying Occasions. And if this be the Case of the Clergy here at home, how much worse must it be with the Episcopal Clergy abroad in our foreign Plantations? who, let the Occasion be ever so extraordinary, can have no Communication with their Bishop without a tedious, dangerous, and expensive Voyage. I remember a Time, when this Consideration was so warmly and affectionately represented to a great Minister, by a great and excellent Person, to whom I had the Honour to be well known, that a *(seeming)* Resolution, at least, was taken to constitute four Suffragans for the *West-Indies*; two for the Continent, and two for the Islands, and two for the *East-Indies*; and for this he had (as he thought) so solemn Assurances, that, meeting me one Day in the Court of Requests, he told me with great Joy, that *now he thought he had effectually secured his darling Point.* How this hopeful Project came afterwards to be totally laid aside, well deserves the serious Consideration of those (if living) by whose Neglect or Opposition it happened to miscarry. The Revival, therefore, of this Office, would effectually remove one

Scandal

Scandal at leaſt of the Reformation, which is the Neglect or Abuſe of Confirmation, which the Friends of Religion lament, and its Enemies make a Jeſt of. I could mention ſome amazing Particulars to my own Knowledge— But in general it may be ſaid, that if this Office be acknowledged to be of Apoſtolical Inſtitution, and one of the *Fundamentals of Chriſtianity* *; and which, if rightly and duly adminiſtered, would be of great Uſe for promoting all the real Purpoſes of Holineſs in adult Perſons who had been baptized in their Infancy, I cannot help thinking that it ought regularly to be adminiſtered every Year, beginning at *Whitſunday*, as that of public Baptiſm was in the antient Church only at *Eaſter*. And it has often puzzled me to think why our 60th Canon, which ſuppoſes Suffragan Biſhops ſhould order it to be adminiſtered only once in three Years. The Conſequence of which is this, that when a Biſhop keeps his triennial Viſitation, and a great Number of Pariſhes are obliged to attend at each Place appointed for it, the Noiſe, the Tumult, the Indecency, with which the young People croud to the Chancel, looks more like the Diverſions of the Bear-garden, than the ſolemn Performance of an Apoſtolical Office. The great Numbers that attend, the Shortneſs of the Time allotted, and the manifold Avocations to other Parts of his Duty, muſt prevent that Decency and Regularity which ſuch holy Offices require. Now if Confirmation be ſo holy, ſo neceſſary an Office as we are taught to believe; and as Matters now ſtand, it cannot be ſo duly and regularly

* Heb. vi. 1, 2.

adminiſtered

adminiſtered in all Parts of the Realm, as our Laws and Canons require; Suffragan Biſhops conſtantly reſiding in the Dioceſe, ſupported by the comfortable Addition of the Office of Chancellor, or ſome other good Dignity, might viſit and confirm through the whole Dioceſe by Commiſſion from the Biſhop every Year, reſerving Ordinations and Inſtitutions wholly to the Dioceſan, except when he is hindered by ſome lawful Impediment, a Licence may be granted to the Suffragan to perform both theſe Offices *pro iſtâc vice*. Many other Advantages would ariſe from this Inſtitution too tedious to mention: And this the Biſhops themſelves have Power to put in Execution. For the Laws now in Force give them Power to appoint Suffragans, and make Clergymen their Chancellors. Though I have heard Biſhops themſelves complain of the Hardſhip of having Lay-Chancellors, when all the World knows they may prevent it if they will. For though the Parliament allows Laymen to exerciſe ſpiritual Authority, yet it does not compel Biſhops to give them Commiſſions ſo to do. The Deſign of that Act was only to authorize the Commiſſion which *Henry* VIII. gave *Cromwell*, when he made him Vicar-General of all *England*; but I dare ſay the Parliament little thought the Biſhops would ſo unanimouſly follow a Precedent, which was ſet up intirely for the Deſtruction of Church-Government. Before the Reformation there were Suffragans in moſt Parts of this Kingdom; and it is plain, that by the Act of 26 of *Hen.* VIII. they were deſigned to be continued after the Reformation: For by virtue of it, as Mr. *Wharton* * tells us, *Thomas Mannyng* was

* Anglia Sacra, Vol. I. *p.* 419.

made

made Biſhop of *Ipſwich*, and *John Saliſbury* Biſhop of *Thetford*, *March* 19, 1536. both conſecrated by Archbiſhop *Cranmer*, and appointed Suffragans to the Biſhop of *Norwich*. The ſame Year *William Moor* was conſecrated Suffragan of *Colcheſter*: The next Year *John Hodgeſkins* of *Bedford*; and the Year after *William Finch* of *Taunton*. And in Queen *Elizabeth*'s Reign, when the Reformation was fully ſettled, we find *Richard Barry* conſecrated Suffragan of *Nottingham*, *Anno Dom.* 1567; and *Richard Rogers*, Suffragan of *Dover*, conſecrated by Archbiſhop *Parker*, * 1569. How they came to be laid aſide, we know not; but ſurely our Anceſtors thought them uſeful, elſe we ſhould not have had an Act of Parliament ſtill in Force for continuing them; and our lateſt Canons plainly ſuppoſe our Biſhops to have Suffragans, when they appoint, *Can.* 68. *That every Biſhop, or his Suffragan, in his accuſtomed Viſitation, do, in his own Perſon, carefully perform the Office of Confirmation.* So that reſtoring this Office would be no Innovation or Alteration in our Conſtitution, but would rather be healing a Breach in it already made, for aught that appears upon inſufficient Grounds, and by an incompetent Authority, againſt the plain Senſe of an Act of Parliament.

Nor would the Office of *Rural Deans* be leſs advantageous to the Diſcipline, the Order, and Peace of the Church; but perhaps more ſo, as it would be an immediate Check upon the Ignorant, the Licentious, and the Immoral (if ſuch there be) among the Parochial Clergy. In the extreme northern and weſtern

* Wood's Athenæ Oxon. Vol. I. *p.* 606.

Dioceſes,

Dioceſes, and throughout all *Wales*, where they are ſeldom bleſſed with the Sight of their Dioceſans, the Viſitations muſt be intirely left to the *Archdeacons*, or ſome *Official*, *Commiſſary*, or *Surrogate*, where, excepting the eſſential Articles of *Procurations*, *Synodals*, *Probats*, &c.—— and a good Dinner, all the reſt is Matter of Form, without ſo much as a Poſſibility of knowing or reforming the Abuſes cognizable in their Courts. A negligent immoral Clergyman will always find honeſt Fellows for Churchwardens, who will never tell Tales of the honeſt Parſon; and if any conſcientious Clergyman of the Neighbourhood ſhould think himſelf bound in Conſcience to inform the Biſhop or Archdeacon of the immoral Lives and ſcandalous Characters of any Neighbour, the accuſed Perſon could not long be a Stranger to the Name of his Accuſer, who ſhould from that Moment be marked out for a little ſneaking Informer, and be treated ever after with Averſion and Contempt. But this would be in a great meaſure prevented by the Office of *Rural Deans*. Their Office is not ſo antient as that of Suffragan Biſhops, though founded on the ſame Reaſons and Neceſſities of Government, in order to divide and leſſen the Burden of the Epiſcopal and Archideaconal Office. They accordingly appointed one of the fixed Pariſh-Prieſts of the County to viſit and inſpect a certain Number of Pariſhes, which was originally limited to ten *, (in Imitation perhaps of *Moſes*, whoſe inferior Order of Governors were Rulers of Tens, *Exod.* xviii. 24, 25.) as the *Romans* had their *Decuriones* in the loweſt Rank of military

* Lindwood. Prov. Tit. de Conſtitut. *c.* i. verb: Decan. rural.

Officers.

Officers. The Diſtricts over which they preſided, were called *Deaneries*, into which all our Dioceſes are divided, and the Perſons preſiding were called *Arch-Prieſts* or *Rural Deans*. Their Authority was not great; however ſome Authority they had, and were ſubject to the Archdeacon, as well as to the Biſhop. When the Biſhops ſent any Orders to the Archdeacons relating to the Clergy, the Archdeacon ſent them to the Rural Deans to be by them communicated to the Parochial Clergy. If a Clergyman were accuſed, it belonged to the Rural Deans to cite him to anſwer to the Accuſation, or any other Perſon obnoxious to the ſpiritual Juriſdiction. This very uſeful Office is now almoſt every where laid aſide; in ſome few Dioceſes they are choſen by the Clergy at their Viſitations to be only annual Officers; and their whole Buſineſs is to make an Entertainment for their Brethren. But ſurely, if this Office were regularly kept up and duly exerciſed, it would contribute as much as any thing to reſtore the Diſcipline of the Church, and reform the Abuſes complained of among the Parochial Clergy. Suppoſe ſome Clergyman of eminent Learning, Piety, and Prudence, were conſtituted by the Biſhop *Quamdiu ſe bene geſſerit*; he might viſit all the Parſonage and Vicarage Houſes in his Deanery once a Year, and obſerve in what Repair they are kept; and when he finds any thing amiſs, might give Orders to have it rectified, and have Power to impoſe ſome light Cenſure on thoſe that neglect the Admonition; and if that prove inſufficient, to acquaint the ſuperior Ordinary with it. He might alſo be impowered to admoniſh any of his Clergy who live diſorderly, firſt by himſelf alone, and then in the

Preſence

Presence of two or three of his Brethren, and upon Non-amendment to suspend him *ab officio* for a Month; and if that prove ineffectual, to acquaint the Archdeacon or Bishop, that some further Course might be taken. He might also convene his Clergy at least twice every Year, where, after a Sermon preached, they might confer together about the Concerns of their Ministry, and the Affairs of their Parishes, and many other Advantages might accrue to the Public, and many Disorders prevented or reformed, which some People are willing to have it thought are incurable.

I can recollect but one Article more that is too often thought to render the Clergy contemptible, that is, their *Poverty*; an Article which, like the rest, they have it not in their Power to prevent or reform, and which it concerns the Possessors of impropriate and appropriate Tythes seriously to consider. If they think not themselves bound to restore them intirely to the Uses for which the Laws of God and the Practice of all *Christian*, yea, and *Heathen Nations* * have allotted them; yet let them make such a decent and competent Allowance for their poor Vicars, that they who serve at the Altar may live by the Altar far above Poverty and Contempt. This is a tender Point, which I shall leave to the Consideration of those whom it may concern, recommending to their Perusal Sir *Harry Spelman*'s *History of Sacrilege*, and Bishop *Kennet*'s *History of Impropriations*; from whom I shall transcribe two very excellent Speeches relating to this

* *Vide* Archbishop Potter's Discourse of Church-Government, *p.* 428, 429.

Subject;

Subject; which I am ſure you, who are as good a Judge of Rhetoric as of Logic, will think to be admirable in their Kind; the one ſpoken by Sir *Benjamin Rudyard* in the Houſe of Commons, 1628; the other by Archbiſhop *Whitgift* to Queen *Elizabeth*; which, though firſt in Order of Time, ſhall come laſt, as in all Proceſſions the little Folks go firſt to make Way for their Betters.

The firſt Speech was ſpoken upon Occaſion of a Bill in the Houſe of Commons for Augmentation of Miniſters Livings, and is as follows:

Mr. PYM,

'I Did not think to have ſpoken again to this Bill, 'becauſe I was willing to believe that the For-'wardneſs of this Committee would have prevented 'me; but now I do hold myſelf bound to ſpeak, and 'to ſpeak in earneſt.

'In the firſt Year of the King, and the ſecond 'Convention, I firſt moved for the Increaſe and 'Enlarging of poor Miniſters Livings. I ſhewed how 'neceſſary it was to be done; how ſhameful it was 'that it had been ſo long neglected: This was alſo 'commended to the Houſe by his Majeſty.

'There were then (as now) many Accuſations on 'Foot againſt ſcandalous Miniſters: I was bold to 'tell the Houſe that there were ſcandalous Livings 'too, which were much the Cauſe of the other: 'Livings of five Marks, and five Pounds *per annum*; 'that Men of Worth and good Parts would not be 'muzzled up to ſuch Pittances; that there were 'ſome Places in *England*, which were ſcarce in *Chri-'ſtendom*, where God was little better known than

'among

'among the *Indians*. I exampled it in the uttermoſt 'Parts of the North, where the Prayers of the com-'mon People are more like Spells and Charms than 'Devotions; the ſame Blindneſs and Ignorance is 'in divers Parts of *Wales*, which many of that Coun-'try do both know and lament.

'I declared alſo, That to plant good Miniſters in 'good Livings, was the ſtrongeſt and ſureſt Means to 'eſtabliſh true Religion; that it would prevail more 'againſt Papiſtry, than the making new Laws, or 'executing of old; that it would counterwork Court-'Connivance, and lukewarm Accommodation: That 'though the calling of Miniſters be never ſo glorious 'within, yet outward Poverty will bring Contempt 'upon them, eſpecially among thoſe who meaſure 'Men by the Acre, and weigh them by the Pound, 'which is, indeed, the greateſt Part of Men.

'Mr. *Pym*; I cannot but teſtify how, being in '*Germany*, I was exceedingly ſcandalized to ſee 'the poor ſtipendiary Miniſters of the reformed 'Churches there, deſpiſed and neglected by reaſon of 'their Poverty, being otherwiſe very grave and learn-'ed Men. I am afraid that this is a Part of the Bur-'den of *Germany*, which ought to be a Warning to 'us. I have heard many Objections and Difficulties, 'even to Impoſſibilities, againſt this Bill. To him 'that is unwilling to go, there is ever a Bear or a 'Lion in the Way. Firſt, Let us make ourſelves 'willing, then will the Way be eaſy and ſafe enough. 'I have obſerved, we are always very eager and 'fierce againſt Papiſtry, againſt ſcandalous Mini-'ſters, and againſt Things that are not in our power. 'I ſhall be glad to ſee, that we did delight as well in

'rewarding as puniſhing, and in undertaking Mat-
'ters within our Reach, as this is abſolutely within
'our Power; our own Duty is next, and other Mens
'is farther off.

'I do not ſpeak this that I diſlike the deſtroying
'and pulling down of that which is ill; but then let
'us be as earneſt to plant and build up that which is
'good in the room of it: For why ſhould we be deſo-
'late? The beſt and neareſt Way to diſpel Darkneſs
'is to let in Light. We ſay that Day breaks, but
'no Man ever heard the Voice of it. God comes in
'the *ſtill Voice:* Let us quickly mend our *Candleſticks*,
'and we cannot want Light.

'I am afraid this Backwardneſs of ours will give our
'Adverſaries occaſion to ſay, that we chooſe our Re-
'ligion becauſe it is the cheaper of the two; and
'that we would willingly ſerve God of that which
'ſhall coſt us nought. Believe me Mr. *Pym*, he that
'thinks to ſave any thing by his Religion, but his
'Soul, will be a terrible Loſer in the End. We ſow
'ſparingly, and that is the Reaſon that we reap ſo
'ſparingly, and have no more Fruit.

'Methinks whoever hates Papiſtry, ſhould, by
'the ſame Rule, hate Covetouſneſs, for that is Ido-
'latry too. I never liked hot Profeſſions and cold
'Actions. Such a Heat is rather the Heat of Diſtem-
'per and Diſeaſe, than of Life and ſaving Health.

'For *ſcandalous Miniſters*, there is no Man ſhall be
'more ſincerely forward to have them puniſhed, than
'I will be: When *Salt has loſt its Savour* let *it be caſt*
'*out upon* the unſavory Place *the Dunghil.* But, Sir,
'let us deal with them as God hath dealt with us.
'God before he made Man, he made the World
'a handſome Place for him to dwell in. So let us

'provide

'provide them competent living, and then puniſh 'them in God's Name: But till then *ſcandalous* '*Livings cannot but have ſcandalous Miniſters.* It ſhall 'ever be a Rule to me, that where the Church 'and Commonwealth are both of one Religion, it is 'comely and decent that the outward Splendor of the 'Church ſhould hold a Proportion, and participate 'with the Proſperity of the temporal State; for 'why ſhould we dwell in *Houſes of Cedar*, and ſuffer '*God to dwell in Skins.*

'It was a glorious and religious Work of King '*James*; I ſpeak it to his unſpeakable Honour, and 'to the Praiſe of that Nation, who though their 'Country be not ſo rich as ours, yet are they richer 'in their Affections to Religion: Within the Space 'of one Year he cauſed to be planted Churches 'throughout all *Scotland* and the borders, worth 30*l.* 'a Year a-piece, with a Houſe and ſome Glebe be-'longing to them; which 30*l.* a Year, conſidering 'the Cheapneſs of the Country, and the modeſt 'Faſhion of Mens living there, is worth double as 'much as any where within one hundred Miles of '*London.* The printed Act and Commiſſion, where-'by it was executed, I have here in my Hand, 'delivered to me by a noble Gentleman of that Na-'tion, and a worthy Member of this Houſe, Sir '*Francis Steward.*

'To conclude, though Chriſtian Religion be eſta-'bliſhed generally throughout this Kingdom; yet 'till it be planted more particularly, I ſhall ſcarce 'think this a Chriſtian Commonwealth; and ſeeing 'it hath been moved and ſtirred in Parliament, it 'will be heavy upon Parliaments, till it be effected.

'Let us do something for God here of our own; and 'no doubt God will bless our Proceedings in this Place 'for ever after. And for my own part, I will never 'give over soliciting this Cause, as long as Parlia-'ments and I shall live together.'

The following Speech of Archbishop *Whitgift* was spoken on this Occasion, as Mr. *Walton* tells us in the Life of Mr. *Hooker*. Not many Years before Dr. *Whitgift* was made Archbishop of *Canterbury*, there passed an Act of Parliament, intending the better Preservation of the Church Lands; by recalling a Power that was vested in others to sell or lease them by lodging and trusting the future Care and Protection of them only in the Crown: And among many that made a bad Use of this Power and Trust of the Queen's, the Earl of *Leicester* was one; and the Bishop having by his Interest with her Majesty, put a stop to the Earl's sacrilegious Designs, they two fell to an open Opposition before her; after which they both quitted the Room, not Friends in Appearance. But the Bishop made a sudden and seasonable Return to her Majesty; (for he found her alone) and spake to her with great Humility and Reverence, to this Purpose:

'I beseech your Majesty to hear me with Patience 'and believe that yours and the Church's Safety are 'dearer to me than my Life, but my Conscience 'than both; and therefore give me leave to do my 'Duty, and tell you, *That Princes are deputed nursing 'Fathers of the Church, and owe it a Protection*; and 'therefore God forbid you should be so much as pas-'sive in her Ruins, when you may prevent it; or that 'I should behold it without Horror and Detestation,

'or

‘ or ſhould forbear to tell your Majeſty of the Sin
‘ and Danger of Sacrilege. And though you and my-
‘ ſelf were born in an Age of Frailties, when the
‘ primitive Piety and Care of the Church Lands and
‘ Immunities are much decayed; yet (*Madam*) let
‘ me beg that you would firſt conſider, that there are
‘ ſuch Sins as *Profaneneſs* and *Sacrilege*; and that if
‘ there were not, they could not have Names in holy
‘ Writ, and particularly in the New Teſtament.
‘ And I beſeech you to conſider, that though our Sa-
‘ viour ſaid, *He judged no Man*; and to teſtify it, would
‘ not judge nor divide the Inheritance betwixt the two
‘ Brethren, nor would judge the Woman taken in
‘ Adultery: Yet in this Point of the Church's
‘ Rights he was ſo zealous, that he made himſelf both
‘ the Accuſer and the Judge, and the Executioner
‘ too, to puniſh theſe Sins; witneſſed in that he him-
‘ ſelf made the Whip to drive the Profaners out of
‘ the Temple, overthrew the Tables of the Money
‘ Changers, and drove them out of it. And I beſeech
‘ you to conſider that it was St. *Paul* that ſaid to thoſe
‘ Chriſtians of his Time that were offended with Ido-
‘ latry, *Thou that abhorreſt Idols, doeſt thou commit Sa-*
‘ *crilege?* And to incline you to prevent the Curſe
‘ that will follow it, I beſeech you alſo to conſider
‘ that *Conſtantine* the firſt Emperor, and *Helena* his
‘ Mother; that King *Edgar* and *Edward* the Confeſ-
‘ ſor, and indeed many other of your Predeceſſors and
‘ many private Chriſtians have alſo given to God and
‘ his Church much Land and many Immunities,
‘ which they might have given to thoſe of their Fami-
‘ lies, and did not: but gave them for ever as an *ab-*
‘ *ſolute Right and Sacrifice to God*; and with theſe Im-

'munities and Lands, *they have entailed a Curſe upon* 'the *Alienators of them.* God prevent your Majeſty 'and your Succeſſors from being liable to that Curſe, 'which will cleave unto Church Lands as the Le-'proſy to the *Jews.*

'And to make you that are truſted with their Pre-'ſervation the better underſtand the Danger of it, I 'beſeech you forget not, that to prevent thoſe Cur-'ſes, the Church's Land and Power have been alſo 'endeavoured to be preſerved (as far as human Rea-'ſon, and the Law of this Nation have been able 'to preſerve them) by an immediate and moſt ſacred 'Obligation on the Conſciences of the Princes of this 'Realm: For they that conſult *Magna Charta* ſhall 'find, that as all your Predeceſſors were at their Co-'ronation, ſo you alſo were ſworn before all the No-'bility and Biſhops then preſent, and in the Preſence 'of God, and in his ſtead to him that anointed you, '*to maintain the Church Lands and the Rights belonging* '*to it*; and this you yourſelf have teſtified openly to 'God at the holy Altar, by laying your Hands on 'the Bible then lying upon it: And not only *Magna* '*Charta*, but many other modern Statutes have 'denounced a Curſe upon thoſe that break *Magna* '*Charta.* A Curſe like the Leproſy that was entail-'ed on the *Jews*; for as that, ſo theſe Curſes, have 'and will cleave to the very Stones of thoſe Buildings 'that have been conſecrated to God; and the Fa-'ther's Sin of Sacrilege, hath and will prove to be 'entailed on his Son and Family. And now, *Ma-*'*dam*, what Account can be given for the Breach of 'this Oath at the laſt great Day, either by your 'Majeſty, or by me, if it be wilfully, or but ne-'gligently violated, I know not.

'And

'And therefore *(Good Madam)* let not the late 'Lord's Exceptions against the Failings of some few 'Clergymen, prevail with you to punish Posterity for 'the Errors of this present Age; let particular Men 'suffer for their particular Errors; but let God and 'his Church have their Inheritance: And though I 'pretend not to prophesy, yet I beg Posterity to take 'notice of what is already become visible in many 'Families; *That Church Land added to an antient and 'just Inheritance, hath proved like a Moth fretting a 'Garment, and secretly consumed both: Or like the Eagle 'that stole a Coal from the Altar, and thereby set her 'Nest on Fire, which consumed both the young Eagles, 'and herself that stole it.* And though I shall forbear 'to speak reproachfully of your Father, yet I beg you 'to take notice, that a Part of the Church-Rights, 'added to the vast Treasure that was left him by his 'Father, has been conceived to bring an unavoidable 'Consumption upon both, notwithstanding all his 'Diligence to preserve them.

'And consider, that after the Violation of those 'Laws, to which he had sworn in *Magna Charta*, 'God did so far deny him his restraining Grace, 'that as King *Saul*, after he was forsaken of God, 'fell from one Sin to another; so he, till at last he 'fell into greater Sins than I am willing to mention. 'Madam, RELIGION IS THE FOUNDATION AND 'CEMENT OF HUMAN SOCIETIES. And when they 'that serve at God's Altar, shall be exposed to Po-'verty, then Religion itself will be exposed to Scorn, 'and become contemptible, as you may already ob-'serve it to be in too many poor Vicarages in this 'Nation. And therefore as you are by a late Act

'or Acts of Parliament entrusted with a great Power 'to preserve or waste the Church's Lands, yet dispose 'of them *for Jesus's Sake, as you have promised to 'Men, and vowed to God*; that is, *as the Donors in-'tended.* Let neither Falshood nor Flattery beguile 'you to do otherwise; but put a Stop to God's and 'the *Levite*'s Portion (I beseech you) and to the ap-'proaching Ruins of his Church, as you expect 'Comfort at the last great Day; for KINGS MUST 'BE JUDGED. Pardon this affectionate Plainness, '*my most dear Sovereign*; and let me beg to be conti-'nued in your Favour, and the Lord still continue 'you in his.'

But I find I begin to grow serious, and you are beginning to nod over this tedious Epistle, which gives me great Hope, that if it prove nothing else, it will prove a good Opiate to you; and so I heartily wish you a good Night, and am,

Dear SIR,

Yours.

SOME

SOME

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE

OF

SIMON SHALLOW, Esq;

Written in the Year 1737.

SOME

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE of SIMON SHALLOW, Esq;

HE was born in the Year 1695; descended from the antient Family of the *Shallows* in *Berkshire*. His Mother was a Sister of Sir *Thomas Softly*, of the County of *Devon*. His Father and Mother, dying young, left him to the Care of his Grandmother *Shallow*; who took so much Care of his Education, that, before he was twelve Years old, he could spell and read almost as well as his Grandmother. As great Care was taken to preserve his Complexion, he was seldom suffered to stir out of the Nursery or Still-room, where he became so great a Proficient in Female Knowledge, that, before he was Fifteen, he was deeply skilled in the Doctrine and Uses of Pickles, Conserves, and Jellies; understood the Value of Cambrics, Muslins, *&c.* could knit a Pair of Garters; could fancy a Suit of Cloaths, or a Set of Knots, for any Complexion. At Fifteen, he was sent to a neighbouring School, with a particular Charge

Charge to the Maſter to conſider his Quality, and uſe him like a Gentleman. But as he quickly made it appear that he had no Taſte for Letters, and a Conſtitution too delicate to ſubmit to Diſcipline, he made frequent Elopements to his Grandmother, and having finiſhed his Studies in about two Years, he was taken from School, and put under the Tuition of the Groom and the Huntſman, and quickly came to have a tolerable Notion of Sport and Horſemanſhip, could ſpeak the Language of the Kennel and the Stable very fluently, and knew the Value of a Dog or a Horſe as well as moſt young Gentlemen of his Age and Quality; and in ſhort (as the good old Lady has often told me with Tears) was, till the Age of twenty-one, as pretty a hopeful young Gentleman as one would wiſh to ſee. Theſe ſhining Qualities drew upon him the Eyes of all the young 'Squires, and the Envy of his evil Genius, who plotted every way to eclipſe his ſhining Character, and ruin his growing Reputation. Numbers of honeſt Fellows, and jolly Companions, crouded about him, to enjoy the Comforts of his Table, and the Pleaſure of his Converſation. They quickly convinced him how ſhameful and unreaſonable it was for ſo fine a Gentleman to be any longer under the Direction of two old Women, meaning the Parſon and his Grandmother; that it was time for him to be his own Maſter, and to be as wiſe and independent as other Gentlemen of his Rank and Fortune. Whatever Impreſſions theſe artful Inſinuations might make upon him, yet they could not directly prevail upon him to be diſobedient to his Grandmother, or diſreſpectful to the Parſon; ſo that he continued to go to Church ſometimes, and carry his Company

Company with him, and to keep up an Appearance at leaſt of Decency and Religion: But alas! his Virtue was too weak to reſiſt the repeated Attempts of ſo many clever Fellows. By degrees they brought him to his two Bottles in an Evening, led him into low Gallantries and genteel Diſtempers. The poor Vicar ſoon after happening to preach about *Righteouſneſs, Temperance, and a Judgment to come*, Acts xxiv. 25. and purſuing his Subject ſo far as to make ſome of his Audience very uneaſy, the 'Squire and his Friends conſidered it as a Satire upon themſelves, and therefore perſuaded him to declare War againſt the Parſon immediately, and go to Church no more. This Advice ſhocked him a good deal; ſilly as he was, he thought Atheiſm a very ungenteel Thing, and an Atheiſt a ſort of a monſtrous Creature, and therefore determined to have a Religion of ſome ſort or other, but of what ſort was the great Queſtion. Whilſt he continued in this Suſpence, he received a Viſit from an old Friend of his Father's, who had been for ſeveral Years a trading Juſtice in the City of——. To him he opened his Heart, told him all his Difficulties, and begged his Advice and Direction. To that ſmoky old Parſon he vowed eternal Enmity, for preſuming to tell him of his Faults in the Pulpit, whilſt others of his Brethren, who thought themſelves wiſer and better than him, were ſo far from taking ſuch Liberties, that they were always ready to enter into any Party of Pleaſure that could be propoſed, and enjoy it with as much Reliſh as any 'Squire of them all; but then how to do this conſiſtently with any Profeſſion of Religion was the great Difficulty. He thought there muſt be ſome Truth at the Bottom of this

this Affair of Religion; but what it was, or how to come at it, he could not tell. Oh! Sir (said his Friend) leave that to me; I will soon put you in a Way that shall make you quite easy on that Account. The great Support of these Parsons at present is *Orthodoxy*. *Pray Sir* (says the 'Squire) *what hard Word is that? What is the Meaning of it? Why Sir* (said he) *Orthodoxy is believing as the Church believes, all the Articles of your Creed, your unfeigned Assent and Consent to all the Points that require your Oaths and Subscriptions; and if we can once unsettle this Point, we shall go a great way towards demolishing their Tyranny and Priestcraft. On this Account it is, that* Arianism *is at present the fashionable and favourite Religion among many Persons of eminent Distinction both in Church and State, who yet, for the present, keep up the Appearance of Religion and Sanctity till an Opportunity shall offer to give a finishing Stroke. I will take care to send you, in a few Days, a full Account of their Principles and Tenets, supported by such Arguments as never a Doctor of them all shall be able to answer.* And he was as good as his Word, and thereby put the 'Squire into such Confusion in spelling and putting together so many hard Words as he had never heard before in his Life, that he was once tempted to be still a Christian, to be civil to the Parson, and say his Prayers at Church as he used to do; but Vanity, Resentment, and a Desire of Distinction, soon got the better of this pious Irresolution: He resolved, if possible, to make himself Master of the Scheme, and endeavour to make some sort of Figure among these new Friends and Acquaintance.

Some little Time after, as I had had a long Acquaintance with the Family, I went to make him a Visit,

Visit, without the least Suspicion that such a 'Squire should ever turn Heretic. After a few Ceremonies, and a short Conversation, I began to inquire after the Health of his Neighbour, and particularly the Vicar; he answered coldly, That he believed he was well; he had heard nothing to the contrary. *Why Sir* (said I) *do you never see him? No* (said he). *What not at Church? No*, (said he) *to tell you the Truth, I seldom go there. Have you not heard that I am turned* Arian? Arian! (said I) *Heaven forbid! What do you mean? What is an* Arian! *Nay, faith* (says he) *I cannot very well tell you what it is; but I am told, it is something which is not a Christian: But I have a Paper here that will let you into the whole Affair.* Upon which he stept to his Bureau, and took out a Sheet of Paper, containing a Train of incoherent Positions, and inconclusive Arguments, as nearly resembling Syllogisms as an Ape does a Man. He attempted to read; but so many hard Words, so aukwardly put together, so puzzled his Head, and spoiled his Elocution, that he could make nothing of it. Upon which, shaking my Head, and smiling, *Sir* (said I) *let me give you a Piece of Advice; you have quite mistaken your Talents: Nature no more intended you for a Heretic, than for a Jesuit. E'en change once more, and be a Free-thinker; in that Character you may possibly shine; for you need be at no Trouble in reading or writing, or even thinking, though that is the pretended Badge and Distinction of the Party. You have nothing to do but to live merrily, and act without Restraint; to banter and talk against Religion, if you can, if not, to laugh at every thing in it that you either do not like, or understand, without being obliged to give any one a Reason for so doing.* This Proposal hit

him; it was quite level to his Capacity; he bit at once, and has ever ſince, in all Companies, and on all Occaſions, exerted his whole Miſunderſtandings in the glorious Cauſe of Free-thinking, and is now arrived at ſuch a Degree of Sufficiency, as to fancy himſelf the invincible Champion of the Party, for this ſingle Reaſon, that let him be ever ſo lewd, or ever ſo impertinent, no Man of Senſe thinks it worth while to contradict him.

F I N I S.